

Truth for Authority, not authority for truth—Lucretia Mott

REASON

THE JOURNAL OF THE RATIONALIST ASSOCIATION OF INDIA

"TO COMBAT ALL RELIGIOUS AND SOCIAL BELIEFS AND CUSTOMS THAT CANNOT STAND THE TEST OF REASON AND TO ENDEAVOUR TO CREATE A SCIENTIFIC AND TOLERANT MENTALITY AMONG THE PEOPLE OF THIS COUNTRY." *"Objects of the Rationalist Association of India."*

New Series.

FEBRUARY 1937

No. 1.

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EDITORIAL

Reason is to-day on trial—the most severe known in human history. The shadows into which contemporary society has irretrievably fallen, under the heavy weight of its inherent contradictions and ghastly iniquities, have unleashed myriad forces of reaction. No sphere of human thought and action is to-day free from the pernicious influence of these irrational forces. Science, philosophy, literature, arts and all the other ideological and cultural activities of man are to-day infected with the poisonous virus of mysticism, fatalism and racialism, or of bankrupt mechanistic thought. Law, marriage, and such other political, social and economic institutions, wherever built on traditional foundations, have become the instru-

ment of irrational despotism, chauvinism and exploitation. Human society has reached a climacteric in which all lovers of reason, cultural progress and social justice have to gird up their loins in a decisive fight against mysticism, exploitation and cultural reaction.

High priests of decadent thought in science as Sombart have come out with the cry of "back to God", while others like Eddington and Jeans announce their belief in the existence of a mathematically-minded designer of the universe. The physicist Millikan manages "to combine a naive physical realism with a belief in an almighty God," while other physicists like Neel Bohr, P. Jordan and Heisenberg, unable to pass be-

yond mechanistic logic to dialectic logic draw untenable conclusions from such achievements of science as the theories of indeterminacy and relativity. They demand a renunciation of the category of causality and assert that the object has no existence apart from the subject. They thus come to deny the sole basis of science, namely, the reality of matter, space, time and energy, whether human consciousness is aware of them or not. Scientists like Kotzowsky and Driesch have carried their metaphysical and idealistic prejudices into biology and have drawn from experimental results such unwarranted conclusions as "the inevitable degeneration of civilised man," "the mystery of the organic world," "the immortality of soul," etc. More than this crisis inside science, some individuals totally condemn science and reason as instances of the spiritual bankruptcy of the age. Professor Shaunsland of Germany cynically declares that "Ignorabimus" is "the last word of scientific knowledge". The vitalist philosophers like Bergson, on the other hand preach that while reason may be useful in knowing the abstract realities of inert matter, it cannot be legitimately used to know the concrete realities of objects in their unity or of living matter. Intuition and not reason according to them is the means of understanding life and the quality of objects in their wholeness. This is the nature of the challenge reason has to meet inside and outside science. Forces of rational progress are nevertheless many in science. Scientists like Max Planck and H. Levy have raised the banner of opposition against this irrationalism challenging science from inside and outside. To them we send our greetings.

In the political and social arena, the situation is equally fraught with dangers to the primacy of reason. "The inquisition has gone—but its place has been taken by a newer and even more implacable foe of rationality—the Fascism which in Germany has made holocausts of scientific works". In the name

of civilization fascist Italy has bombed and massacred innocent Abyssinians, men, women and children. This irrational idealisation of war and sadistic nationalism, this return to the ethics of the jungle, is a standing challenge to civilised mankind. The liberties of the people, particularly of the toilers of the world, are being increasingly curtailed in every country. Vested interests are everywhere discarding the fig-leaf of democracy and establishing their brutal dictatorship. Freedom of thought speech and association is an essential pre-requisite of rational conduct and thought in society, and yet, to-day, there is nothing so rare as this fundamental democratic right. Colossal poverty, disease and frustration of hopes amidst incredible plenty, is the distinguishing feature of our social life, and there can be no greater instance of the irrational basis of this social existence than this. Rationalism can stand vindicated only when all the progressive forces of the world unite "behind and beyond the puerile mosaic of nations and the savage geometry of maps" in defence of scientific thought, cultural and human progress.

The vast majority of the people of this great land of ours is sunk in dire poverty, disease and cosmic ignorance. They, who form one-fifth of the world's population, are to-day crushed under the weight of caste and class tyranny, religious bigotry, superstitions and all forms of exploitation. Communal riots break out at regular intervals and the lurking assassins in dark lanes become champions of religion, while the civic sense of the public is deplorably inadequate to inspire them to assert themselves against the communalists and their indirect supporters.

The future progress of this land is indissolubly bound up with the progress of scientific thought and action in every sphere of the life of its people. The vastness of the problems that Rationalists have to face in this land need not and should not create in them a sense of

despair. The measure of our present task shall be the measure of our coming success. Let all lovers of rationalism in this country band themselves together

into one solid group and carry their crusade with united strength into the heart of superstition and reaction.

K. T. C.

SEX EDUCATION

Havelock Ellis cites the authentic story of a lady who had learnt to swim, to the great horror of her pastor, who thought it was not quite proper for women to swim. "But suppose I fall into the sea" she asked, "and run the risk of being drowned?" "Oh" said the pastor, "in that case you ought to remain quiet till a man comes and saves you." He adds the remark that in no sea is the risk of drowning greater than in that of sex. Are we to imitate the pastor by opposing sex education?

It seems that when somebody asked Alphonse Daudet his opinion on sex education, he replied, "As for boys, they learn quite enough in the street and from the papers; as for girls, they must not be taught physiology. I can only see disadvantages in this new invention. The truth is dirty, it destroys illusions, it frightens and disgusts the mind of a girl." One would think that it would be possible at the present day to find people with these opinions. But there are die-hards in every field, and considering that people who have had no sex education themselves tend to think sex dirty, it is no wonder that they cannot digest the idea of telling anything about it to children. I had myself occasion to speak to a group of teachers on this subject a few years back and mentioned the fact that children begin to ask questions about their own origin at the age of three years. One of the teachers contradicted me and said "My boy never asks me anything of that kind!" When I suggested that he may be asking his mother, he said "Oh, he dare not ask his mother." With that kind of attitude, children know that they will be snubbed if they ask these questions and go to other

sources for information. They learn in the street, as Alphonse Daudet says, or rather in the gutter, with disastrous results, what they should learn at home much more sanely. It is therefore the teachers and parents who require to be educated first before any progress can be made with sex education.

The essence of good education is that whenever a child shows genuine curiosity about anything, it should if possible be satisfied, of course within the limits of its comprehension. Now it often happens that the mother or the teacher does not know exactly what to say. There are manuals for their use, but even the writers of these are not always free from prejudice. Progress is therefore necessarily slow. But one important point is gained if it is agreed that children's curiosity should be satisfied. But prejudice is very tenacious and one hears of professors in medical colleges in England declaring that they feel ashamed to teach anatomy and physiology to mixed classes! How can one expect such people to say anything to children about sex?

America is supposed to be more advanced, but Judge Lindsay found that only 5% children had been told about sex by their parents, who usually think their children utterly ignorant about it and are not aware that they take great interest in sex, girls as much as boys, if not more.

Apart from the bad effect of snubbing or of telling lies to children about sex, any teaching of hygiene is incomplete without a special reference to sex organs, especially in the case of girls ignorant about the functions of their bo-

die. When this knowledge inevitably bursts upon them at puberty, they thus receive a shock for which nothing has prepared them and to which they often react in foolish if not dangerous ways. If the mother has not the courage to give the necessary information, the family doctor or the school doctor (many people do not know that there is such a thing as a school doctor!) is the best person to be entrusted with the task. It must however be borne in mind that morality and religion must not be mixed up with hygiene. It is just as harmful to speak of the body as "the temple of God" as to speak of certain parts as dirty. They are two phases of the same mentality, the tendency to consider sex taboo, either because it is dirty or because it is sacred. The correct way is to treat sex organs like any other organs, and to add perhaps that it is not usual to speak of them in public, as a matter of manners.

Ellen Key has protested against the system of editing classics for children by omitting certain passages and says that children ought to be left free to read any books by good authors. If they are too young to understand certain passages referring to sex love, they pass over them of their own accord, and if they are sufficiently old to understand them, they will not do any harm. The crudity of the Bible does not shock children, nor are they unduly excited by them. Ruskin has also given the opinion that girls should have free access to libraries. Havlock Ellis says that nude statues and nude pictures by the old Italian masters are excellent to train children to regard nudity in an artistic way, and suggests that copies of these should be placed in school-rooms as an artistic training to the eye. Apart from the fact that the nude in itself is not erotic, even 'erotic art in its best form does not excite any

but the most legitimate emotions.' Havlock Ellis thinks that at puberty, photographs of beautiful living nude models ought also to be shown to pupils as a corrective to the false conventions which have spoilt Greek and Roman art to a certain extent.

The horror of nudity in Europe has a Christian origin and Christian missionaries have done great harm by spreading it wherever they went and insisting wherever possible on clothing primitive people, who thus become more accessible to disease. Not only that, but with their ridiculous ideas of observing the sabbath, even bathing was prohibited on Sundays in some places! The advantages of nudity from the hygienic point of view are however coming to be recognized as can be seen from the numerous nudist societies that have sprung up in Europe and America, though Hitler has suppressed them in Germany. A recent report shows that there is one in Karachi.

It is now-a-days admitted by educationists that free contact of the nude body with air, water and light is conducive to health, abolishes prudery and gives a sense of beauty. Adults require education in this respect too. Children naturally love nudity, but adults attribute their own sensations to children and inculcate a horror of nudity. Forel thinks that children should know beforehand the forms their bodies will acquire when they themselves are adult and that mixed bathing should therefore be encouraged. 'A knowledge of natural facts being obtained in accordance with natural laws, the prudery which poisons sex life is rendered impossible.' Children should become familiar with nudity at home and sex education will then become much simpler.

R. D. KARVE.

NOTES AND HAPPENINGS

BY

C. L. D'AVOINE

The Year 1936 After Christ which has just closed witnessed some stirring events in many parts of the world. Among other occurrences, the rape of Abyssinia by Italy, the Civil War in Spain, the aggressive policy of Italy, Germany and Japan, the abdication of King Edward VIII, and in India the furor of fanaticism, were the most stirring.

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Pressed by over-population and the necessity for expansion, the Italians, inflamed by Mussolini and blessed by the Pope of Rome, invaded Abyssinia and spread terror and death among a semi-civilised people who were quite content with their lot. Under the pretext of civilising these people, the Italians began by decimating them with poison gas which did not spare women and children, and with the superior arms at their command easily conquered that country. Christendom was pleased at this and in Italy thanksgiving services were held all over and the Pope and bishops praised the prowess of the Italian army and thanked God that another country had been added for the expansion of Roman Catholicism.

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The Vatican is no doubt justified in rejoicing that some millions of semi-civilized people will henceforth be subjected to its domination, especially at a time that in Europe Roman Catholicism is fast losing its hold on people. Already the Roman Catholic priests are casting longing eyes at the Dark Continent and count on converting millions of Africans who, they say, have a natural liking for such a religion as Roman Catholicism. Catholicism, in effect, ought to appeal strongly to the savages and barbarians of that country who believe in bloody sacrifices, vicarious punishment and mumbo-jumbo, and Africa is undoubtedly the

land where that religion ought to flourish and blossom to the fullest extent.

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In Europe, that religion continues to have a bad time and is visibly declining despite all the efforts of its show-men to keep it alive. In Spain, for instance, that erst-while most Catholic country, the population has evidently had enough of it. Ever since the revolt of that country against this creed, the priests, as one may guess, have been doing their utmost to reinstate themselves, however much the population dislike them. Their latest efforts have been to join the ranks of the insurgents hoping thereby to share in the spoils, should these rebels succeed in asserting their supremacy over the loyalists who govern the country.

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The result, so far, is still in the balance despite the most sanguinary fratricidal war which has already ruined that fair country and drenched it with blood. The savagery of these rebels, assisted by the Moors, priests and nuns, has been one of the worst features of this conflict. They have tried to win the sympathy of the world by putting all the acts of barbarism, cruelty and savagery on the loyalists. The truth is that it is they who have shown all these qualities to the fullest extent. Their sinister methods have been exposed by some Catholics themselves and others. It was recently stated in the London Spectator by Dean Inge that wherever they have had a foothold in Spain they have massacred the loyalists and Protestants wholesale, women, and even babies, have not been spared. The loyalists have displayed the greatest courage, determination and heroism in resisting these sanguinary hordes.

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The exhibition of such unheard-of savagery and barbarism in Spain has given rise to a good deal of controversy

in many parts of the world as to the cause of such a disposition among the Spaniards who were reputed to be a very pious and God-fearing people. Most people agree that besides their inherent racial temperament, the religion in which they were nurtured for centuries is greatly responsible for the cruel disposition of these people. Their religion has certainly taught them intolerance, fanaticism and bigotry. The Inquisition which lasted for centuries in their country could not have failed to familiarize them with cruelty and fanaticism. Religion is responsible for the backward condition of the people, 70 per cent of whom are illiterate. Small wonder that such a people, when put to the test, showed the true nature of their character. Where ignorance, fanaticism, bigotry and superstition have lasted so long, it is only natural to see ferocity and cruelty in the highest degree. It is by its fruits that one can appreciate the value of Catholicism and Spain has proved it now, as Mexico did a few years back.

No Rationalist, or, for that matter, no fair-minded person, will be taken in by all the tales of deliberate Church-burning and shooting of priests and nuns in Spain. That many churches have been burnt, there is no doubt about it. Some nuns and priests have been shot, but they were guilty of openly helping the rebels and the churches were used to store arms and ammunition, and in their towers guns were placed to fire on the loyalists. All these details have been published in English and French papers by people who have returned from Spain.

The abdication of King Edward VIII, loved by his subjects all over the British Empire, came as a surprise and a great shock to those who admired the courage, honesty and sincerity of that monarch. His democratic disposition had endeared him to the common people and had made him exceedingly popular. True to his high principles, he sacrificed the greatest throne on earth rather than

play the hypocrite and go against his conscience. For the present one may sorrowfully say that the Aristocracy and the Church have triumphed. The former hated his democratic tendencies and the latter was alarmed at his scant regard for outworn dogmas and irrational conventions and traditions. By his abdication we have lost a truly great, brave, courageous and sincere King. Every person who believes in righteousness and sincerity will cherish his name and will derive comfort and strength from his example to stand by what he considered to be right, true and honourable, however hard the sacrifice.

India maintained her reputation for being the land of fanaticism, bigotry and religious imbecility. The many communal riots that took place in different parts of the country, particularly the recent one in Bombay, make one despair whether we shall ever see common sense and reason dawn on the people of this country. It is sad to think that in the name of God, people can easily murder one another and rejoice in it. These god-intoxicated people probably believe that their God rejoices in the dastardly work they do on his behalf. There is certainly something very wrong with creeds that teach such abomination. So long as people will remain ignorant and besotted, we must expect such things. Who will make any efforts to enlighten them?

The question of caste in India is so deep-rooted that even Indians who have become Christians cannot easily shake it off. We learn from the papers that recently in South India, at Kumbakonam, many Roman Catholics objected to Harijan Catholics sitting near them. There was a great row on account of this in the Church and the Bishop had to interfere. Catholics generally boast that there is no distinction in their church, and in the eyes of God all are equal. Such, however, does not appear to be the case in India.

THE CRISIS IN SCIENCE

BY

{ K. T. CHANDY

"The impregnable position of science may be described in a few words. We claim and we shall wrest from Theology the entire domain of cosmological theory. All schemes and systems which thus infringe upon the domain of science must, in so far as they do this, submit to its control and relinquish all thought of controlling it. Acting otherwise proved always disastrous in the past and it is simply fatuous to-day." In these words, spoken in the course of an address to the British Association, at Belfast, in August 1874, Professor Tyndall threw out the challenge of science, reason and materialism to Theology, Faith and *a priori* methods of idealistic speculation. Since that historic date, six decades of unparalleled triumphs in empirical science and in the co-ordination of its results have passed by. The boundaries of scientific knowledge have been enlarged enormously. The impenetrable, immutable atom, 'the brick of God's creation,' has been split, the quantum theory has been formulated, and the inter-connection between matter and energy has been established. The dialectic unity of time and space has become a proved fact, through the work of Einstein.

The fact that elements themselves are subject to evolution and that their qualitative differences are due to the quantitative differences in their composition has been established through the experiments of Mendelieff and Henry Mosley. Victory is almost touching the finger-tips of scientists in their fight against idealism. But the prevailing mood among large sections of intellectuals, among whom are some of the honoured descendants of Tyndall, is not one for reiterating the defiance of that great scientist, but one for surrendering all faith and reasoning, and for accepting mysticism. Here lies the crisis in science.

The cause of this is not far to seek. The crisis in science has forced a sympathetic crisis in and against science. "Since no piece of scientific work, when we include its external relations, can really be divorced from the social function to which it contributes, science can be no more ethically neutral than the purpose for which production is undertaken." (H. Levy). It inevitably shows the same cleavage within its own confines that human beings show within society at large and the eradication of this cleavage depends upon the eradication of the great social conflict that has generated it. The progressive and reason-loving group in science will finally triumph with the help and triumph of the progressive and rationally-minded class in society.

The social conditions necessary for the progress of science are rapidly disappearing. The serious breakdown of the present economic structure has thrown several means of production out of use. The attention of those who control the economic and political life of nations is no more on the further development of the means of production, but it is engrossed in the devising of means for bolstering up the decadent social structure. Thus the impetus to scientific progress, which a progressive industrial structure gives, is absent to-day. The diversion of the major portion of public funds for forging the sinews of war, are depriving scientists of adequate funds for their research. The acute suppression of free thought and the regimentation of whole peoples for imperialistic purposes, now prevailing throughout the world, have destroyed the atmosphere necessary for the advancement of science. Brute force, and not reason, callous exploitation of the toilers and not social justice, are the dominating forces in contemporary society. Many an

independent-minded scientist has been expelled from Germany and other fascist countries. Their property has been confiscated and their works have been burned in open streets. All science is reduced to propaganda or to a well-controlled instrument for the creation of deadly armaments. This abuse of science is creating confusion in the minds of many and it is raising a romantic revolt against science. This abuse by vested interests in society is mistakenly ascribed by many to some innate devilishness of science itself, as if science has a personality of its own. In such an atmosphere of chaos, the progress of science is seriously menaced.

"Matter has broken down into energy. Energy has broken down into mathematical formulae. The universe is merely the objective demonstration of higher mathematics conceived in the consciousness of God." "Matter is no more an immutable category in science. Materialism is no more scientifically dependable." "Matter, space and time are merely subjective-relative concepts. The real is not the material universe, but God, the transcendent being." These are some of the fantastic conclusions drawn from the brilliant discoveries of modern physics. What then is the exact nature of matter or energy? What is the great revolution in physics that has brought about a crisis in it?

The experiments of Heinrich Rudolf Herz established the fact that the "objective difference between light, radiant heat and electro-magnetic impulses or oscillations is relative only, being one of the periodicity of their wave-lengths of propagation". The ultimate identity of all forms of energy and the transmutability of each of such forms into kindred forms become scientific verities.

If energy is reducible to terms of wave motion, it becomes clear that forms of energy beyond the known types did exist and that they could be discriminated by their wave lengths. This was confirmed by Rontgen through his discov-

very of "X-rays". Long before his time, Crookes had observed that on sending electricity through a vacuum, a stream of particles passed from the cathode to the anode. These particles were soon shown to possess electrical properties as well as mass. The fallacy involved in a conception of matter and energy as absolutely different categories, became clear. If the cathode particles were electricity, how could they have mass and be particles? Eventually they were identified as what are now called "electrons", or unit particles of negative electricity. Rontgen observed that these electrons, on collision with some target placed in the tube, produced a new and highly penetrative form of radiant energy. These rays, now called X-rays, have been proved to be electro-magnetic light rays of exceptionally short wave-lengths. This discovery brought additional corroboration for the conception of the ultimate unity and transmutability of the various forms of energy.

With the help of X-rays, J. J. Thompson knocked out of hydrogen atoms, particles charged with negative electricity. It was found that their exit from the atom did not appreciably change the mass of the remaining part, but caused it to be positively charged. The dense positively charged mass is today called proton, while the negatively charged particles are called electrons. This proved that the atom was composite and that it combined within it both the forms of electric energy. On the other hand, it proved that electric energy itself had a structure.

Becquerel discovered that there were certain elements like Uranium which were naturally radio-active, which emitted without any external stimulus "rays" or "light corpuscles" of the type artificially excited in a crooke's tube. The most important of such elements is radium, whose rays or 'corpuscles' generate large quantities of heat, exhibit electro-magnetic qualities, destroy minute organisms and cellular tissues and

produce chemical changes. Thus radium is continuously creating energy.

From where could this energy have been created and how is this activity consistent with the theory of the conservation of energy which states that the total quantity of energy in the universe remains constant? Obviously the energy generated by radium is not the result of transmutation of some energy existing outside it. Therefore either the theory of conservation of energy, as based on a conception of absolute difference between matter and energy in their natures, is untenable, or matter and energy are mutually convertible.

It was found that radium was continually losing in weight simultaneously with the emission of rays. This proved that the radio-activity was the consequence of disintegration of matter. This raised the problem of the truth of the theory of the conservation of matter. If energy is not another form of matter, this theory is not tenable. Thus it became clear that the theory of the conservation of matter and energy to be true must be based on a conception of the mutual convertibility of matter and energy. From this it does not follow that neither matter nor energy is real or that they are merely subjective concepts. It only means the co-existence of matter and energy in their dialectical unity.

The corpuscles emitted by radium were subjected to careful analysis and were found to contain three types of particles, Alpha, Beta and Gamma. Alpha particles were found to be nuclei of the element of helium; Beta particles were found to be electrons or units of negative electricity; Gamma particles were found to be a highly penetrative form of X-rays. This proved that not only is matter a form of energy but also that energy is a form of matter. Energy was found capable of disintegrating into unit particles whose size and mass could be measured.

Rutherford and Soddy have by their works proved that the atom resem-

bles a solar system with a core or nucleus charged with positive electricity surrounded by a number of attendant electrons moving in concentric circles round the core. The positive charge in the nucleus is of the same quantity as the negative charge in the electrons. Professor Chadwick split the proton or central nucleus and found it to consist of a neutral mass, called neutron, and a positron or unit of positive electricity. Mr. Blockelt, in the meanwhile, showed that all electronic particles were not negatively charged, that some were positively charged. He found out the unit of positive charge and called it positron while the negative electronic particles were called negatrons. Thus we have to-day an atom which is not completely "broken down into energy" even if such a statement has any meaning.

While the impenetrable, immutable atom was "yielding up the ghost" and proving its compositeness and incidentally that of energy, the same problem was being attacked from the other end by scientists who were studying the nature of energy in itself. They have concluded that energy itself is not the "ultimate, impenetrable thing" out of which the universe is built as a house is built out of bricks, that it has a structure, that it is produced in Nature not by imperceptible variations, but in discrete quanta, in "packets", that waves of energy differ among themselves according to their periodicity. Besides, it has been proved that light, in common with all varieties of radiation has mass. If light is thus placed in the category of matter, it becomes clear that all the other forms of energy must equally be placed in the same category, especially in view of the various experimental results regarding the nature of particles of electricity, enumerated above.

The conclusion is irresistible. It is not that "matter has broken down into electricity" or that "energy has broken down into matter," but that both matter and energy are realities, distinct from each other and yet united with

each other. "Energy is the active aspect of Mass (which is the essential characteristic of matter for all but sophisticators who seek to deny to subatomic substance the name of matter). Matter is the inertial aspect of energy." Yet they are both objective realities existing independently of the human awareness of the same. Herein lies the unity and distinction between matter and energy and the necessity for the discarding of mechanistic materialism for dialectical materialism. The unity of the universe does not arise from its being uniformly built out of some ultimate, simple, impenetrable category whether of matter or of energy. The explanation of phenomena does not lie in searching out an 'ultimate brick' of matter or energy and following it up with a mechanistic succession of cause and effect till we reach the present. "The only unity into which the universe can be conceptually resolved is that of a dialectically developing unity of mutually conditioning and mutually interpenetrating opposites—the developing unity in antagonism of active material and material activity. 'Matter' exists, not in the abstract, but in the form of concrete and specific phenomena, each with its special distinguishing activity. 'Energy' exists likewise not in the abstract, but in the concrete, specifically distinguishing activities of matter."

The interpenetrating opposites which are in a dialectic unity are at the same time material realities and not subjective concepts. Matter and energy have not ceased to be objectively real, simply because they are discovered to be mutually convertible. The simple proof for this is the practice of even those who deny it. Every individual who dons a piece of cloth round his waist does so fully recognising its material reality. He relies fully upon its opacity for covering up his nakedness. When the most idealist of philosophers munches any eatable between his teeth, he is expressing in practice full faith in the material reality of that eatable, of its nourishing qualities and taste. Similarly energy may be a

mere prejudice of the vulgar. Nevertheless every individual living in a civilised country is everyday enjoying the beneficial effects of electrical, mechanical, light and other forms of energy. Materialism thus stands vindicated by the discoveries of modern physics, yet not the mechanical but dialectical materialism. The attempt of Eddington and Jeans to deny the reality of matter and energy, because old conceptions about these have undergone a modification, only betrays their intellectual senility.

Having denied the reality of the material universe, Jeans & Co., proceed to assert that the ultimate reality is a God who thinks in terms of mathematical symbols. This back-door attempt to resurrect God as an emaciated, impersonal, mathematical being is unfortunately not very much relished by pious clericals who are engrossed in the worshipping of a God who is full of love for his henchmen and hate for his opponents. Qualities of matter, so far as they are to be compared, have to be expressed in terms of quantity. "These qualities being in themselves quantities of things subject to change or motion must be compared as quantities of motion. Motions varying in quantities and in inter-relation simultaneously can only be compared by means of mathematical equations in which symbols stand as representatives of varying quantities of movement, and varying relations between variable movements." Imagine one of the planets moving round the sun. In calculating its velocity and tracing its path, the observer on earth has to keep in mind and make adjustments for the fact that the earth itself is revolving round the sun. Such changing relations of things can only be expressed in mathematical symbols. But to rush from this to say that the symbols worked out by man are the primary things and that the changing relations under consideration are secondary phenomena merely obeying the mathematical formulae is the height of metaphysical insipidity. Yet

this is what Eddington, Jeans and others are guilty of.

The "Principle of Indeterminacy" has, the idealists among scientists say, destroyed materialism and determinism. We have noted before how Rutherford has shown the atom to be an epitome of the solar system, wherein the negatively charged electrons revolve round the positively charged nucleus. It has been found that the electron can and does vary in its orbit, by both jumping out of the atom altogether or by jumping into an inner circle round the nucleus. But it has been impossible to say where exactly in the total spherical area of an atom, any one of its electrons will be at any given moment. This is the Principle of Indeterminacy. From this the obscurantist conclusion is drawn by some that there is nothing determinable in the world, that therefore scientific laws are all incorrect and valueless, and that the world changes according to the free will and fancy of a God. Others draw the conclusion that electrons are fitted with free wills, that therefore man must be supposed to have absolute free will unconditioned by his society, heredity and environment as to what he wills, and that his present position in the world must be due to a primal sin committed against God in the distant past by his ancestor. Yet there are no deductions

more foolish from the "principle of indeterminacy" than these. It is impossible to make absolutely accurate measurements, firstly because the speed of the electrons is so great that for all practical human purposes "they are everywhere-at-once, all over the sphere of their orbital movement around the nucleus". But this only proves the principle of dialectical materialism that "a thing in motion is and is not at a given point at a given instant." The indeterminacy arises secondly because it is not possible to say in any one case in advance whether outside influences may or may not induce a given electron to hop from one path to another in the moment of its observation. But this again only proves the principle of dialectical materialism that in a universe that is constantly becoming "accident plays its part in determining the concrete manifold of historical development."

Further, the "indeterminacy" is a circumscribed, determined one. Our knowledge of the general relations of an electron is adequate enough to enable us to express as a highly accurate statistical average, the limits of its possible variation. Thus in this case again it is advanced materialism that stands vindicated.

(To be continued).

VIEWS AND OPINIONS

The Other Side of the "Crisis"

Behind the abdication of King Edward VIII, and as the main cause of that abdication is the sinister power of the Established Church. This is the solid and pregnant truth, which was stressed in my last week's notes, the "Free-thinker" being the only paper in which the facts were then stated. We are pleased to find other papers are taking up the same position. The "Evening Standard", for instance, two days after

our notes appeared, came along with the following:—

We are to lose our King for no other reason save that he wishes to marry a lady who has been a successful petitioner in the divorce court. . . . That was the one and only cause. . . . The separation of the King from the Nation has been brought about primarily by the section of public opinion which is strongly and sincerely opposed to divorce. But this body has

been supported in its opposition to the marriage by others who can make no claim to sincerity.

In the "Church Times," for December 11, there is a still stronger proof that my analysis of the situation was correct:—

The Marriage Service is a sacrament. And the Church cannot admit to its Sacraments men and women who repudiate the Church's law. We do not know what representations the Archbishop of Canterbury may have made to the Cabinet or the King. It seems to us, however, certain that it must have been made clear that no ecclesiastical dignitary would take part in the marriage of the King and Mrs. Simpson.

Finally there are the words of the Archbishop of Canterbury (at least one of the principal agents in the "Crisis") in his broadcast of Sunday last. He finds it sad that Edward should have sought happiness

in a manner inconsistent with the principles of Christian marriage, and within a circle whose standards and ways of life are alien to the best instincts and traditions of his people.

There it is, the cat is completely out of the bag. The first reason is the real one, the last is a mere excuse. Edward's circle was the same as he had had for many years. It was that of a very large section of the fashionable society that fills the Churches. As to the traditions of Royalty, one need only go back to Edward VII, and ask whether the Archbishop ever by word or act rebuked him. And if one skips Victoria, and continues the story up to the next woman sovereign, Anne, the monarchs of England established a tradition of which the least said the better—for them. The Archbishop has shown himself an expert in Christian humbuggery and backstair manoeuvring. It was the prospect of having to give his archiepiscopal sanction to a marriage which the law of the land

declares to be perfectly legal that gave rise to his burst of indignation. The Archbishop has given us an example of the dangers of a State Church and of permitting religion to govern our sense of social values.

It was not the letters received from abroad that induced Mr. Baldwin to visit the King. It was the Archbishop of Canterbury. He did not denounce the proposed marriage from the pulpit, that might have stirred up feeling and encouraged the move for disestablishment. He is no Pope Innocent and prefers more tortuous methods. He visits Mr. Baldwin, and Mr. Baldwin goes to the King, but without saying that the Archbishop is behind it all; neither does he tell the House of Commons that it is the Archbishop who has instigated his visit. He simply says that the "country" will not stand the marriage. Why if the matter had been put to the vote there would have been a huge majority in favour of the King doing as he pleased. The King, who has been lauded as the idol of the people, would hardly have been refused the right to select his own wife. We are used to the "Pickwickian sense" of a statement; we ought soon to have "Baldwinian truth" as a currency of speech.

* * *

Was there a Crisis?

The matter does not stop here. Mr. Baldwin chose to create what he called a "grave constitutional crisis." But, if we are to measure the conditions of a constitutional crisis, there was no such thing, until Mr. Baldwin made it so. Properly, a constitutional crisis can only arise when the King refuses to act with or on the advice of his ministers in matters that affect the Government of the country. So far as that is concerned the King does nothing, and can do nothing except by back-stair methods. But he is neither legally nor morally bound to ask his ministers for their approval of his marriage. And even on this question he re-

frained, in the most provocative circumstances, from public speech until, as he said, it was "constitutionally possible for me to speak," that is, until he was able to speak for himself, and not read as his own a prepared speech. As to there being a genuine constitutional crisis the King's own words may stand:—

There has never been any constitutional difference between me and them (He was referring to his family and his ministers) and me and Parliament. I should never have allowed such an issue to arise.

There was no genuine constitutional crisis, there was only an Archbishop-cum-Baldwin crisis, although neither had the courage nor the honesty to confess it. It served to confuse the man in the street; and politicians in both Houses of Parliament, who must have known something of what was going on, kept up the imposture for fear of rousing religious resentment when they next faced their electorates. On the question of his marriage the King is bound neither by custom nor law to consult his ministers. In marrying a woman who had divorced her husband he would have been doing what every man in the kingdom is legally entitled to do; and it is absurd to say that a marriage which would be perfectly honourable in the case of an ordinarily decent man is not tolerable in the case of the King. And a marriage to a woman who had divorced half-a-dozen husbands, and where the man and woman have a genuine love for each other, is far more a real marriage than are seventy-five per cent of royal marriages.

* * *

How it was Worked

Let us put the matter in order. There has always been a party in the Established Church that has opposed divorce as un-Christian. Defeated in making this the law the claim has been set up that while the law of the land allows it, Church law does not, and, as the

"Church Times" says, a man and a woman once married in Church remain married whatever the law may say. Many of the clergy of the Established Church decline to marry divorced persons, although on this matter they are on precisely the level of a Registrar of marriages, and may be legally compelled to carry out their duties or resign. They have conscientious objections against doing what they are paid to do, but not against taking money for work they will not do. The King was the head of the Established Church, and if he had married Mrs. Simpson the Archbishop of Canterbury would have been one of the clergy to have performed the ceremony. If this had happened the fat would indeed have been in the fire. And for the King to be married in a Register Office would have been a blow at the Church, even though King Edward's religious beliefs are said to be a microscopical quantity.

So, what W. S. Gilbert called the "dignified clergy" got to work. It will be remembered that King Edward's association with Mrs. Simpson had for long been known. The number of pictures showing them together at home and abroad proves this. In America the talk has been more open and more general. Nothing was said publicly, nothing was said by the Archbishop, nothing was said by the conscientious Mr. Baldwin. But two or three months ago American papers began to talk about the marriage of Mrs. Simpson and the King. And this aroused the Christian conscience of the Archbishop and some of the Bishops, and also brought into play what Mr. Baldwin called his "Victorian" conscience. A *laison* was one thing. That was to be expected, and both the Christian and the Victorian conscience could watch it with a smile—and a smirk. But a marriage of the King and Mrs. Simpson was a very different thing, and something had to be done about it. The King had made it quite plain that he was engaged in no vulgar *laison*, but aimed at an honourable marriage. It was too

much for the Baldwin-Archbishop combination.

It must also be noted that it was Mr. Baldwin who, at the probable instigation of the Archbishop, asked to see the King, not the King who asked to consult Mr. Baldwin. The King to his honour, declined to budge. He had made his choice and would abide by it. Mr. Baldwin promised resignation if the King did not forego the marriage. The King offered to agree to Mrs. Simpson being his wife minus the office of Queen. This may have been at the lady's instigation; but that too was declined. It would not have met the Archbishop's objection to the Church marrying one of the parties in a divorce. It was Mr. Baldwin who turned a question that had nothing to do with the constitution into "a constitutional crisis"—he and the Archbishop. Mr. Baldwin's statement to the House of Commons was—Baldwinian. It concealed the basic facts. The late King has been sacrificed to religious intolerance and political chicanery. In his very human and moving broadcast the King showed great forbearance, and a diplomatic power of shelving awkward questions that I greatly admired. He was magnanimous in his handling of those who were driving him into exile, and showed real affection for his family. If and when he gets married I wish him every happiness. I have no greater belief in hereditary monarchs than I have in hereditary dust-men; but at the end of the broadcast I metaphorically raised my hat to the man who had shown himself greater than the King. He is the only one who has come out of this affair with his dignity untouched and his honour unsmirched.

One thing that followed immediately the abdication of Edward must have filled many decent minds with disgust. For eleven months Edward had been held up as one of the greatest Kings we have had in more than two centuries. We had been told how the people loved him, almost worshipped him, for his noble qualities of mind and character. The

King is forced to abdicate, and before this abdication is made legal, crowds of men and women are waiting to see the new King and they cheer wildly on his appearance. Common decency ought to have suggested silence as the best attitude, and that the cheering might have been left to a later date. It was like dancing on a dead man's grave, or holding his dead, naked body up to execration. It almost made one feel ashamed of one's kind.

* * *

The Aftermath

As I said last week, the principle of hereditary monarchy has suffered a severe jolt. It should remove from the mind of the most ignorant the belief that the King rules the country, or that he has any hand in shaping its destinies. He has no open voice or influence in either making or unmaking laws. He is not permitted to make a public speech that is not written for him, on any important occasion, and if he dared openly to try and influence policy there would be a genuine "Constitutional Crisis". The influence he exerts has to be surreptitious, and his influence with the people is mainly due to the survival of feelings that belong to the time when the King caused the rain to fall, the crops to grow, and even kept the sun in the heavens. How little it matters what kind of King we have in an hereditary monarchy is shown by the fact that whether the King be wise or foolish, good or bad, he is acclaimed on his coronation, flattered during his reign, and praised on his death. We do not fear when a King dies, for we know that the next one will be as good. That is the beauty of heredity.

It has been feared that the abdication of Edward VIII may affect the business side—political and economic—of the coronation of George VI. I doubt it. Five months of intensive, and expensive advertising of the graciousness of the Queen, the beauty of the children,

the happiness of the Royal Family, and the devotion of George the Sixth to duty, will do the trick. Already the business has started. The Sunday newspapers—the encyclopaedia of the unintelligent—are already at work. That philosopher of the half-witted, Mr. Beverley Nichols, has already written that he turns "with relief" from Edward the VIII—whom he had hardly left off praising—to George VI. Journalists, with so many other opportunities of earning a dishonest living, will fill columns of ecstatic praise of the happy Royal Family, and the pictures of two little children will be everywhere exhibited to make profit from the sentimentalism of the crowd. The men who marched down Whitehall waving penny flags and shouting, "We want Edward," will be waving the same flags and shouting "We've got George,"

the Archbishop will be able to thank God that we have so wise and so good a King to reign over us. George VI, if he has any intelligence and any sense of values, will inwardly smile at the stupidity and the sycophancy of it all.

I have no sympathy to offer Edward VIII. If he and Mrs. Simpson are sincerely attached to each other, then the King has chosen the better path. He can be himself, careless of the tricks of politicians and the backstair-tricks of medicine-men. And if the people of this country have intelligence to read one moral of the "crisis," it should mean bringing us a step nearer the disestablishment of the Church and the secularising of the State.

CHAPMAN COHEN.
in the Freethinker

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The Journal of The Rationalist
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5-12, Queen's Road,
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*All contributions should be addressed to the
Editor "REASON" Jagjivan Mansions, 13, New
Bhatwadi, Bombay 4, and should reach the editor on
or before the 15th of each month.*

*The writers of the articles in this journal are
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*For Advertisement rates etc. Please apply to the
Business Manager "REASON" care of the Rationa-
list Association of India. Concession rates to members.*

CORRESPONDENCE

O. B. R. Dickey, (Sialkot). Thanks
for your letter; publishing Report means
money. However, we hope to publish
a six-monthly Report in July next.

Roshan Mahomed. (London).
Many thanks for your encouraging letter.
As you see, we are doing our best.

AT THE SECRETARIES' TABLE

Our Greetings

to Fellow Rationalists, Sympathisers
and Friends.

With the re-appearance of "Rea-
son" in its present form and policy, we
are sure it will have a wider circulation.

Rationalism does not concern reli-
gion alone. A Rationalist is a person
who dares to think rationally on any and
every subject under the sun and is not
afraid of the consequences of thought.
Every human being thinks, but that does
not make him a Rationalist or a Free-
thinker. He may use his reason with re-
gard to his every day affairs, but when it
comes to religion he draws a line and
says that the sphere of thought ends
there. It is his faith. When it comes to
sex, it is taboo. Hence thought alone is
not the criterion of a Rationalist, but
thought in each and every sphere of life.
To be a true Rationalist, one has to
adopt rationalism as the philosophy of
life.

To come back to the point, the re-
appearance of "Reason" proves that the
R. A. I. has not ceased to exist. And
now that there has been a considerable
manifestation of enthusiasm, it is
hoped that the Association will run
smoothly and steadily, pushing forward
stronger than ever.

It goes without saying that however
enthusiastic the Committee may be, it
cannot do much without the co-operation
of the members. Here are a few sug-
gestions as to the ways members can be
of use to the best of causes.

Members can help us:—

- (1) By sending to the Executive
Committee constructive criticisms
and comments on our activities.
- (2) By sending newspaper cuttings of
interest to the Editor of our offi-
cial organ "Reason".
- (3) By keeping an eye on the press
and sending letters to the Editors

supporting our views on every possible occasion.

- (4) By giving away our leaflets and selling our periodicals—among their acquaintances.
- (5) By sending names and addresses of their friends who are Free-thinkers—or are interested in our Association, and
- (6) By contributing articles to our journal.

To all, but specially to those who find they can help us in no other way, we appeal for funds. To help financially, of course, means to help most effectively, for if a member cannot himself work for our ideals, he can at least do something to enable others to do so. Won't you start doing what you can right now?

We are encouraged to note that our letters to our members before the General Meeting have met with response and we have during these few days received some encouraging letters and renewals of

subscription. We take this opportunity of thanking Lt.-Col. Sanjana of Poona for his donation of Rs. 15 and Mr. Jal M. Cooper for his donation of Rs. 25. We also thank Lt.-Col. Sanjana for the copy of "Freethinker" he is kind enough to send us every week.

We look forward to receiving renewals of subscription from all our members now that we have started our activities?

Though some subscriptions may end in February or March and even later, we hope members won't mind renewing them in January. It will much facilitate the work of our Treasurer if all subscriptions are renewable in January.

The next copy of "Reason" will be sent by V.P.P. to those whose subscriptions have already ended. Please be good enough to honour the V.P.P.

A. SOLOMON,

Jt. Hony. Secretary.

REPORT OF THE GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting of the Rationalist Association of India was held at Mongini's on Monday, the 9th of November, 1936, at 7-30 p.m., when there were present:—

Dr. G. V. Deshmukh,
Dr. C. L. D'Avoine,
Dr. A. S. Erulkar,
Mrs. A. S. Erulkar,
Dr. Geo. Coelho,
Dr. S. B. Gadgil,
Dr. D. S. Dubash,
Mr. R. D. Karve,
Mr. K. T. Chandy,
Mr. T. J. Godiwala,
Mr. A. M. Suterwala,
Mr. A. P. da Costa,
Mr. J. S. Warden,
Mr. M. E. Reuben,
Mrs. M. E. Reuben,
Miss Kapila Khandwala,
Mrs. D. R. D. Wadia,
Dr. Husayn F. al-Hamdani,

Mr. K. J. Khandwala,
Mr. Divekar,
Mr. D. R. D. Wadia,
Mr. Abraham Solomon,
Mr. D. F. Karaka,
Miss Kitty Reuben,
Mr. J. Ezekiel,
Mr. D. R. Davar.

Dr. G. V. Deshmukh took the chair.

The Minutes of the last meeting were read and confirmed. The Annual Report and the S/Account was considered and adopted.

The following Office-Bearers were elected for the year 1937:—

President: Dr. G. V. Deshmukh.

Vice-Presidents:

Dr. C. L. D'Avoine,
Dr. A. S. Erulkar.

Members of the Committee:

Dr. Geo. Coelho,
Mr. R. D. Karve,

Mr. Milton David,
Mr. K. T. Chandy,
Mr. A. M. Suterwala,
Mr. T. J. Godiwala,
Mr. Rashid Gulmahomed,
Mr. S. B. Rath.

Joint Honorary Secretaries:
Mr. Abraham Solomon
Miss Kapila Khandwala.

Honorary Treasurer:
Mr. D. R. D. Wadia.

There was a discussion regarding the official journal of the Association and it was decided that the new Executive Committee should see that the journal was re-started in 1937.

The Executive Committee was empowered to elect an editorial board for the purpose of guiding the policy and the work connected with the publication of the journal.

The Editorial Board should see that the journal has a wider policy and contains articles on various subjects of general interest, such as Science, Philosophy, Art, etc.

Although the attendance was not as it ought to have been due to the Curfew Order in the city, there was a marked liveliness in the proceedings.

The meeting ended with a vote of thanks to the chair.

* * *

The members and guests then helped themselves to the delectable dishes supplied by Mongini's, while a free rationalist atmosphere pervaded the gathering.

Among the speakers were Mr. D. F. Karaka, the guest of the evening, Dr. C. L. D'Avoine, Dr. Geo. Coelho and Mr. D. Dubash.

Mr. A. P. de Costa, one of the best classical pianists in Bombay entertained the gathering with a few beautiful pieces on the piano, while Miss Kitty Reuben kept those present lively with a few tap dances and catchy songs.

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- If you desire Intellectual Liberty and Rational Freedom.
- If you hate Superstition, Priestcraft, Fanaticism, Bigotry and Hypocrisy.

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For further particulars please write to :—

The Secretaries,

Rationalist Association of India,

5-12, QUEEN'S ROAD,
BOMBAY 2.

Those who expect to reap the blessings of freedom
must, like men, undergo the fatigues of supporting it.
—Thomas Paine.

REASON

THE JOURNAL OF THE RATIONALIST ASSOCIATION OF INDIA

"TO COMBAT ALL RELIGIOUS AND SOCIAL BELIEFS AND CUSTOMS THAT CANNOT STAND THE
TEST OF REASON AND TO ENDEAVOUR TO CREATE A SCIENTIFIC AND TOLERANT MENTALITY
AMONG THE PEOPLE OF THIS COUNTRY." *"Object of the Rationalist Association of India."*

New Series.

MARCH 1937

No. 2.

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SEX OBSESSION

Controversy has been raging for some time among Marathi *litterateurs* on a subject which may seem puerile to many, viz. the propriety or impropriety of putting a woman's picture on the cover page of a magazine. Some of these pretend that this is done, not in the interests of Art, but merely to attract readers, though it is difficult to understand why genuine art should not attract readers, so that both purposes might be served at the same time. The objectors are mostly men who are obsessed with sex and some women who know no better than to follow their cue. The men pretend that these pictures excite lust and the women have not the sense to see that this argument will not do for them. One picture in particular about which a row was made represent-

ed a young man carrying a young woman across a stream. The sex-obsessed men found this an indecent picture though both the persons were fully dressed. This beats the controversy raised some years back over a picture by a recognized Bengali artist, which was reproduced by a respectable Poona magazine which is now defunct, and which represented an Indian woman after her bath, the body being visible through the wet garment, which is a favourite subject with artists. It was admitted that it was an artistic picture of high merit, but some people argued that its proper place is an Art Exhibition or a museum and that it was not proper for the cover-page of a magazine, which may fall into the hands of respectable women and children. This mentality is difficult to understand with-

out a little analysis. If the picture excites lust, this effect can only be produced on normal men and not on normal women, while children are not concerned at all. But these objectors do not object to its being seen by men, but by women and children. This is obviously absurd and can only be explained by a sub-conscious jealousy, which makes them consider such pictures unfit for public exhibition. As they cannot see this, or at least say it openly, they find absurd arguments in support of their view. Some people call such pictures obscene, a very convenient word since obscenity has never been defined, and cannot be defined, just as God cannot be defined, and for the same reason, viz. that like God, obscenity is imaginary. Otherwise, what sane person who sees cinema posters and films now-a-days can object to such pictures on a magazine? Some of these sex-obsessed people staged a debate recently on "Marathi Periodicals" in general, with the object of emphasizing their objections and coming to some kind of agreement to ban such pictures. People connected with periodicals were invited to speak, but to the great disappointment of the promoters, nobody referred to this subject during a 3-day debate, and Mr. Tuljapurkar, who presided on the last day, had to express his disappointment and speak on the subject himself at the end. He said he did not wish to call these pictures obscene, but he did not think it proper that erotic pictures or stories should appear in Marathi magazines. He said it might be the practice all over the world, and admitted that there were plenty of erotic pictures and books in ancient literature in Sanskrit and Marathi, but he did not approve of Marathi magazines in modern times giving publicity to this kind of stuff. In his opinion, if it was thought desirable to have a woman's picture on the front page, it should be the famous queen Laxmibai of Jhansi going to war on her charger, or if it is absolutely necessary to show any portion of a woman's body unclothed, let it be a woman suckling her baby.

But to give simply a woman's picture, even if she is fully clothed and doing nothing in particular, seemed to him to excite lust. One wonders if such people close their eyes when walking in the street, since one sees live women there instead of pictures!

Another public or semi-public debate was arranged recently at the Majestic Cinema to discuss the behaviour of "Kirloskar", a magazine which was originally founded as an advertising medium for the well-known metal works at Kirloskarwadi, but which has recently come into prominence by shifting from orthodoxy to more or less radical views on sex and religious matters. The journal is thoroughly commercial and this change of policy was perhaps made as a means of publicity. It made room for a very effective campaign against false Sadhus who exploit the public for their own benefit as well as stories and novels which did not stick to orthodox morals. The particular story which excited the wrath of orthodoxy turns on an incident in which a woman in difficulties is obliged to sell herself, a not very uncommon theme and which has been used in a recent Marathi film. Still Vahinibai Sahab of Ichalkaranji wrote an open letter to the Editor about it, charging him with publishing literature which lowered the moral standards of society. It happened that this same Rani Saheba had herself written a story some years back for the same magazine under an assumed name, in which a woman was obliged to change her religion when in difficulties. The Editor in question, replying to the open letter, gave out this secret of the assumed name, which of course is against editorial morals. That apart, orthodoxy pretends that it is much less objectionable to change one's religion than for a woman to give up her chastity. Now orthodox literature does not support this view. The Mahabharata, which is almost considered a religious book by Hindus, and which contains the famous Bhagavad-Gita, which is so often quoted as an authority by Hindus, con-

tains stories which do not at all bear out the claim that chastity is more important than religion. There is, for instance, the story of Shvetaketu, who got enraged when he saw a stranger trying to persuade his mother to go with him, even in the presence of the father, who was coolly explaining to his son that there was nothing strange in this and that the mother was free to do exactly as she pleased. The son then made a stricter rule, enforcing fidelity on women. This story is quoted by Pandu in order to persuade his wife to have children from other people, as he was himself incapable of giving her any. The story says that there was a curse on him that he would die if he touched his wife with erotic intentions. This same wife had had a child before marriage, who became the mighty warrior Karna, and she is nowhere described as a fallen woman, though she had an illegitimate child just for fun and was not obliged by difficulties to give up her chastity. Even Shri Krishna, the incarnation of God, who is supposed by the orthodox to have recited the Bhagavad-Gita as it stands (in verse) on the battle-field, in order to persuade his protegee Arjuna to fight for all he was worth and not consider that he was fighting against his kith and kin, —even this sacred personage treated her with respect. All this talk about chastity being more important than religion is hardly orthodox.

A woman speaker in the debate stated that now that women formed a vast portion of the reading public, men would have to consider their tastes in the matter and not write what they pleased. Of course if readers boycott a writer, he will have to change or stop writing, unless he is a capitalist who does not depend on publishers. But it is certainly not true that women do not like light stories of love. Religious literature abounds in such stories and is mostly patronised by women. Our Haridas's and Puraniks would starve without the patronage of women, and they have quite a lot of such stories in their bag-

gage. It is no use for women to pretend that they are, any more than men, averse to erotic literature.

Another point is sometimes made against love stories and erotic literature in India, viz. that India requires all the energies of its people to secure complete independence and so all literature must have that object in view, erotic literature being merely waste of time and energy. This argument looks specious, but will not bear analysis. In an important crisis, people will not even think of food, but you can hardly ask people to give up food because India is in a crisis. Sex expression is another fundamental necessity and cannot be given up for long periods without harm. Some measure of sex stimulation is necessary for the sex function. In nature, this stimulation is directly obtained by other animals by sight and smell. In man, the sense of smell has become comparatively very weak, and sight is obstructed by clothes in civilized countries. The only ways of sex stimulation under the circumstances are pictures and literature. No amount of preaching will be of any avail to induce people to forego these sources. Of course it is sheer nonsense to pretend that these preachers are in any way more patriotic than others who make allowances for nature. One can be a keen patriot and at the same time satisfy all kinds of physical needs. Great patriots and warriors who constantly risked their lives for their country are not historically known for their chastity, rather the contrary. It is merely a sex obsession to be constantly objecting to anything which has reference to sex however remote. It is a method of keeping one's mind constantly on sex. Such a person is just as much (if not more) obsessed with sex as a person always running after the other sex. In fact the former is much worse, because much more unnatural than the latter, and is more likely to develop neurasthenia. One can very rarely thwart nature with impunity.

R. D. KARVE.

WHENCE DISPASSION?

BY

M. V. V. K. RANGACHARI.

Man philosophises. He reflects upon the environment and rarely on his internal tendencies also. The Hindu mind had drawn up into three channels these occasions of reflection, of philosophy, of tender detachment and dispassion (Vairagya). The pangs of childbirth (Prasuti), those inspired hours spent in listening to textual teaching (Purana) and by the side of death (Smashana), these are the triple factors of the reflective mood. The analysis is equally applicable to the collective mind.

Natural forces like the Bihar and Quetta earthquakes, the Ganges and the Brahmaputra floods, the rise of the Ohio and Mississippi rivers, volcanic activities and fire leave man in his thinking strain. But besides events which he cannot help, over which he may not exercise the least control, there are others brought about through his own agency.

Leaving past history alone, the civilised world shaped mostly by human inventive genius shocked itself into the great war of 1914-18. There was wholesale dealing in death. Europe for a while came under the spell of the philosophy of the burial ground (Smashana vairagya). The better mind of man went about in search of a formula for the prevention of its recurrence. The period immediately following was one of the framing of a world-wide Purana. Internationalism was loudly in the air. The League of Nations was supposed to stand for the birth of a sustaining God (Vishnu) which would annihilate the arch-devil of the war-mind. Long covenants and conventions were woven around the organisation, and the sacred-threads of Pacts and Agreements adorned its shoulders.

But the realistic mind of Europe, in Russia, Germany, or Italy was not slow to perceive the inadequacy of the

League-Idol to send peace on earth. The International Puranas served only to fill the smaller States-Members from Africa and South America with a sense of pious security, a hope and a religious assurance that mankind is rightfully on its legs around the globe. When Germany walked out, occupied the Rhineland, claimed to tax her waterways, and the recovery of her lost possessions, when Japan discovered that Manchukuo was more valuable than the League Company, the choirs of International Puranas were not disturbed, and Geneva sang her Mantras of world-peace and harmony.

The tragic devotion of Ethiopia to the Godhead of Collective-security was not disturbed even when her throne went off the ground, and like a true Christian, Haile Selasse hopes that humanity will come to itself one day. 'Though He kill me, yet will I trust in Him' was no old saying. To the Ethiopian it is as new, as fresh, as the incendiary bombs of 1936-37. The danger of misplaced faith, of devotional fervour towards objects or ideals which are incapable of responding to human prayers or appeals, is best illustrated when the Hindu prostrates himself before a stone image of the Goddess supposed to prevent disease, as when the dark Emperor declared his continuing, abiding confidence in the potency of the League. If in India, the dispassion of scriptural lessons, (Purana Vairagya) of those bright moments when we nod approval of every mystical allusion as somehow helping to uplift our life, when we are ready to take in any suggestion about the deity as carrying us onward to our cherished goal, leaves us in the static position of ineffectual inertia, or sends us down the scale of subdued humiliation, not counted worthwhile by the peoples of the larger world, the faith of a Christian people in the modern scriptures dealing in Collective Se-

curity has not fared any better, although roused to action by uncaused aggression, they fought desperately to retain the ground. In the larger world, too, as for India, the era of the Puranic dispassion (vairagya) would appear to come close on end. The chanting of the International Mantras has not been more effective than the singing of any holy hymn.

Nor is this reflection confined to fight with an Africander by the more skilled Italian. Spain to-day witnesses the fight among the kith and kin of the white race, wherein the Moors from Morocco are hired to slaughter civilised brethren. Their alien creed is not a disqualification. The 'Juntas' want to succeed against their own nationals, and it is a domestic question in which the League has no concern. Non-intervention is the word for Spanish battles. While dispensers of League-justice, the sustainers of the League-Dharma, talk of non-intervention and the prevention of war-materials and volunteers entering the field, Germany and Italy throw their weight on the side of the rebels. The Purana of Pacifism, of insular detachment still holds the mind of some of those sages, the British and the French Vyasa, Vasishthas, and Brihaspathis, Edens, Baldwins, and Le Blums, who albeit concentrate upon the expansion of their martial equipments. That is the Yoga of active inaction, an unconcern with the immediate present, however disastrous with a view to efficient expression when the hour strikes.

The third phase of the Vairagya is yet to arrive. The birth-throes of a new order of society are visible even now. The march of events in Spain is no isolated factor of world-history to-day. The emergence of a fresher economic disposition, of newer opportunities to the

humbler classes, the workers and the peasants, and the overhauling of social relations in terms of reasoned calculation and human affection, where until now rigid formulae of caste, cold considerations of wealth or the selfish approval of the priest hold the field, these are world-wide factors of which the trouble in Spain serves as a mere index. In politics where the wisdom of the many is replaced in several centres by the dictation of one, there is also the need for the clarification of the issue in the modern sense of liberty and individual emancipation. To think of man in terms of the mere factory-hand, to prune human talent to the dead level of automatic submission cannot be the perfection of the kind.

Even in India, the pains of child-birth, of the pangs of suffering to further the coming in of a new era are not less visible. Whatever the new Constitution, whatever channels Indian mind may explore politically, and otherwise, signs of approaching new-birth are clearly marked. Of the three phases of Vairagya, man's reflective mood is at its holiest, its most refined centre when he ponders about the beauty of that new creation. Europe may travail for long, India may grope about her constitutions. But sure as a pregnant lady, the modern world will send forth the child of a new order, of graceful living, and of letting others live. Its labour may only be attended upon by reason, the midwife, who, if as her critics condemn, she is not productive herself, is at least potential enough to ensure safe delivery. I, for one, can never forget the indispensable presence of the midwife, any more than fail to be moved by Prasuti-vairagya, the dispassion attending on child-birth, the aftermath of elections.

NOTES AND HAPPENINGS

BY

Dr. C. L. D'AVOINE

The General Elections which were held last month showed how communal, religious and caste feelings have a strangle-hold on Indians, a fact that the rulers of the country deeply appreciate. People voted for their particular candidates not because they were considered the right persons to represent them in the Council and Assembly, but because they belonged to a community, religion and caste.

In Bombay some of the candidates appealed to their voters on pure religious grounds and their opponents tried to raise prejudice against them by appealing to the bigotry of their co-religionists.

Some of the opponents of Mr. Brelvi, for instance, pointed out that Mahomedans should not vote for him because he encouraged birth control and had sympathies with Hindus! Many Catholics voted for one of the candidates because he is known to be the "Yes Man" of priests and would do anything to please them. Among the ignorant people of this City the appeal to religion has the strongest force and communal considerations run close to it. Superstition also had a good deal to do with the choice of candidates. Some of them, it would appear, fared badly because they had chosen unlucky colours as symbols.

Among the members of the Bombay Municipal Corporation who voted against the opening of the birth control clinics in the city, were Mr. A. Soares, a teacher in a Catholic School, Dr. A. D'Souza, another "Yes Man" of priests, and Dr. E. Moses, who has himself opened a birth control clinic! It is certainly a fortunate thing for Dr. A. D'Souza and Mr. A. Soares that a hospitable British territory like Bombay, is so close to their country—Goa—which is too poor to maintain a large population. If the Goans

had understood long ago the advantages of Birth Control, they might by this time have been able to restrict the overpopulation of their country and not found it necessary to emigrate as Dr. A. D'Souza and Mr. A. Soares and thousands of their countrymen have been obliged to do.

One is pleased to read in the February number of the London Literary Guide a short but telling "Open Letter" to the Archbishop of Canterbury on the part he played in forcing the abdication of King Edward VIII. From correspondence in the English papers it is clear that the English people have, at last, recognized the sinister influence of their State Church on the social progress of their country. About two years ago, the Lord Chief Justice of Scotland in open court stated that England was the most priest-ridden country in the world. In the light of past events there seems to be a good deal of truth in this.

It is with regret that we learnt of the sad death of Sir Alexander G. Cardew, K.C.S.I., the able contributor and book reviewer of the Literary Guide. He died suddenly on the road in London. He was long connected with India where he occupied a responsible position in the Government. He was a retired I.C.S. and was a very learned man. The R. P. A. also lost an eminent Honorary Associate in the person of Sir Grafton Elliot Smith. Colonel T. H. Eliot, the eminent eye specialist of London, who died recently was also a member of the Rationalist Press Association and was an enthusiastic worker in the cause of Rationalism.

Among some ships which sank on the coast of Europe last month, three

bore the following names:—"Our Lady of Lourdes", "The Holy Virgin", and "San Sebastian". Some of the sailors of "Our Lady of Lourdes" were drowned. One wonders whether they were disillusioned in time before recognizing the futility of Our Lady of Lourdes. It is certainly a curious fact that three boats which bore such holy names were not under the special protection of the saints. Alas for human delusion!

* * *

Here is a case which shows how bigotry in India is rampant and is an overpowering force against progress. It would appear that an Indian film named "Dalit Kusum" depicted the pitiable lot of a Hindu widow, named Kusum, who was obliged to live a life of misery and hardship on account of the cruel conventions of the orthodox Hindu society. As a contrast to this, there was shown in the story the modern and gay life of the "smart set" who believed in free love without the responsibilities of a married life. This part of the story introduces a scene where a book on "birth control" was prominently displayed in the midst of a gay company. Although the film was at first passed by the censors and had actually run for the 4th week at the Minerva Cinema, Lamington Road, it was considered objectionable by one of the censors who prevailed on his colleagues to prevent its exhibition. There was no protest or adverse comments in the press or in any responsible quarters, just the bigoted objection of one of the censors!

* * *

The Catholic clergy which at first tried to deny that it gave active support to the rebels in Spain, though everybody knew it, has now thrown all its reserve to the wind and now openly advertises its support to the insurgents' forces. At the Eucharistic Congress held at Manila recently, the clergy exhorted the people

to pray for the success of General Franco's army—and elsewhere the Catholic press continues its bitter vituperation against the Loyalists. As is well known, many Catholics, themselves, have strongly protested against the part their church is taking in this Civil War.

* * *

In a little town in Central Europe the parish priest of one of the Catholic churches asked his parishioners to pray for the success of the rebels' arms; 300 of these parishioners refused to do so and they wrote a letter signed by all of them to the priest warning him that they would refuse to recognize him as their parish priest if he again made such a request.

* * *

Mr. John McGovern, Member of Parliament for the Shettleston Division of Glasgow, is a Roman Catholic. The Literary Guide for February last says that he recently visited some areas in Spain where the fighting is taking place. What he saw has made him very indignant. He accuses the Catholic authorities of Spain in vigorous language in a Glasgow paper. He says that they exert unfair pressure on behalf of the insurgents which amounts to political blackmail. He also says that "bishops and priests in the occupied territory of Spain have a heavy and fearful responsibility, and have prostituted religion to the low level of the gutter. Moors have been promised a special place in Paradise for their share in the struggle, been blessed by Bishops and have had Sacred Heart badges fixed to their rifles, with the 'Sacred Host' sewn to their ammunition bags with beads". Just imagine the respect these Bishops must have for the religion they pretend to believe so earnestly! If a non-Catholic had said this, there would have been a howl of execration. It is fortunate that this was said by a Catholic.



PRE-SCHOOL EDUCATION IN RUSSIA

PAPER READ

BY

Miss Kapila Khandwalla

AT THE

Twelfth All-India Educational Conference, Gwalior, Childhood and Home Education Section.

The last great war disrupted the economic and social life of Russia. It was followed by a Revolution and a civil war which set up a rapid process of disintegration completed by the famine of 1921-1922. It was only 4 or 5 years after the Revolution that the Soviet Government was in a position to begin reconstruction of any kind, including education. One of the first decrees issued by the Bolshevik Government, made education universal and free for all, irrespective of race and creed.

The educational system of any country is conditioned by the economic system prevailing at that time. It is in the light of this truth only that we can correctly understand the peculiar principles underlying Soviet Education. (The ultimate aim of Soviet philosophy is "From each according to his capacity, to each according to his need").

After several experiments the Soviet Government has evolved a unified system of education for the whole of U.S.S.R. Its structure is quite simple and its basic aim at every stage is, that the education of human beings should make them capable of acting independently within a collective unity. This article is limited to a consideration of the pre-school education only.

Children upto the age of 3 are put in crèches or similar institutions. There are kindergartens or nursery schools for children between three and eight where they remain as long as their parents are working. These schools are open all the year round. There are playgrounds for children during summer months. After this period which is known as the pre-

school period, the soviet school system provides for ten years' general education for boys and girls between 8 to 10 years. After the general education period, adults attend higher educational institutions and vocational schools where the courses last for 4 or 5 years. Closely allied with these are scientific research and politico-educational institutions.

Under the term pre-school education, is included the care and education of the child from birth to seven years. From birth to almost 4 years, greater emphasis is placed on the physical well-being and development of the child and so it is under the care of the Commissariat of Health. The child is sent to a creche but it is entirely voluntary. After they leave the creche, they enter the nursery infant school and are under the care of the Commissariat of Education.

Before the Revolution, kindergartens and nursery schools could be counted on the fingers of one's hand. They were mainly run by private organisations and charitably inclined persons. There, the child under 8 hardly received any attention from the state. These were attended by a few children of the well-to-do. The mass of the children of peasants and workers were kept uncared for. The problem of the pre-school child demanded immediate attention from the state. The homeless children were becoming a great menace to the people. Such children were dangerous as carriers of disease and as potential criminals. The State at that time had little time and means to meet the problem adequately. Soon a "Children's Friend Society" composed of education-

ists and psychologists was started and formed to grapple with the task. The difficulties in their way were tremendous. There were very few trained workers and the work was left to be carried on by untrained workers most of the time and in most of the institutions. They wrote simple leaflets giving instructions for the care and education of children. This continued for some years—say roughly till 1921-22—the period of economic restoration. This period was followed by a period of economic reconstruction.

The Soviet Constitution gave equality of status to women and no discrimination against women was permitted. Women were given all the facilities to work side by side with men. Even maternity leave for 2 months before and after child-birth was given with full pay. So there was a great influx of women in industry. This made the problem of the pre-school child all the more urgent. "To give freedom and security to the present generation at the expense of the future was unthinkable." So this work was taken over by the state from private hands. It started organising creches and nursery schools. It tried to make nursery infant school compulsory in the beginning but had to give it up as there was a lack of buildings, equipment and above all teachers. It was a very difficult economic period and there were other more burning problems even in the educational sphere (than the pre-school child). So the attention of the state was diverted from the pre-school child to the (primary secondary factory apprentice) older children. The development of women under the new law has helped the movement. Women organised societies to care for children. A room in a factory or on the farm was set aside for children, and women took turns in looking after them. The need for trained workers was keenly felt. Five of the most active and politically keen women were given an intensive eight day training. After a short time another group was given the same course. Then the first group was released for a three months' course,

Most of the women workers were mothers. This was the condition in 1928-29. They have developed it to such an extent that educationists go from all over the world to see and learn from them.

There is a belief that children are taken away from their parents by the State at their birth. This is wholly untrue and wrong. The Soviet philosophy is far from destroying family life. Krupskaya while discussing this question said "The parental feeling cannot be suppressed, even if it might assume another form, and bring greater happiness to children and parents. . . . The rearing of children in the socialist commonwealth must be so continued that parents themselves have a part in it, together with teachers."

The State interferes only when it finds out and knows that the child is being ill-treated or neglected. The creche as well as the nursery infant school are not compulsory. However, conditions are all in favour of the creche and nursery infant school, for it is infinitely better for the child to be cared for in hygienic, attractive surroundings by carefully trained persons than to leave it to the tender mercies of ignorant though well meaning grandmothers or servants. It is a great relief for a working mother to know that her child is well cared for while she is at work. It makes her a happier and better worker. The State carries on a wide propaganda for creche and nursery infant school, still, there are a number of parents who do not send their children to the creche.

It is not true to say that mothers have very little time for their children. The working hours are shorter and will be further reduced in future so that mothers can have a number of hours to spend with their children during day. And now, no intelligent person believes that mothers and children should spend all the working hours together. The factors underlying the creche and infant school move-

ment are the fullest freedom and development of women's rights and every child's inalienable right to the best conditions of life. It is very essential for children's proper development to live and play collectively for some time during the day.

There are mainly 3 special features in the Soviet pre-school education, which we do not find in any other country in such institutions. The first is poly-technisation which means a general knowledge of all scientific principles of all production processes, and will at the same time give children and youths practice in the use of elementary tools of all branches of production (Marx). Four and 5 year old ones know all about the Five Year Plan mainly through play. The 6 and 7 year ones learn to handle tools which we in our ignorance prevent them from using (accidents, practically unknown).

The second feature is the cultivation of the collective outlook and attitude. All the care in the world is given for the development of the individual but attention is also paid to the fact that the individual is developed for the collective good. There is much play and work which they utilise for collective work. They however realise that a child requires to be alone and see that that is provided for it.

The third and the last special feature is the extent of self-government prevailing in such institutions. Nothing is done for the child which he can do for himself alone or with the help of other children. One is surprised at the amount of things left in the hands of children, viz., order, tidiness of rooms, care of toys, apparatus, laying tables, etc. Corporal punishment is punishable as an offence throughout the U.S.S.R. Good behaviour is secured by group criticism,

wall paper, etc. Where the simple remedies fail the child is examined by the school-child psychologist and house conditions are inquired into and steps are taken to improve the conditions if found necessary.

The nursery school meets the physical need of the child by providing a place for it to stay while the mother is working and is the educational centre where the child's sense training, emotional training and mental training begin. It is the educational side of the creche that strikes a visitor more forcibly. Institutes like "The Mothers' Child Institute" of Moscow are taking up the responsibilities of the child more and more. There are nurseries with elaborate as well as the simplest models for the benefit of parents, other creche teachers and organisers. Everything is explained very simply and arranged in such a way that attention is held at every point.

The Director (Dr. Konyis in Moscow) has divided the whole territory into districts and has placed each district under a doctor and a nurse who are responsible for children under four. They take the initiative of having more. There are plans of districts, charts and diagrams for lecture courses for teachers in the office.

There are pre-natal and post-natal museums for the professor as well as the illiterate mother. The exhibits are artistically arranged and show psychological insight in the arrangement.

The financial needs are either met by the state or the factories, clubs, etc. that run them or by both. The number of pre-school institutions has increased tremendously and now there are more qualified persons in charge.

(To be Continued)

THE CRISIS IN SCIENCE

BY

K. T. CHANDY

"The age of rugged materialism that reached its zenith during the last century is giving place to a new synthesis". (Levy). There are few theoretical discoveries in the realm of science more responsible for this process than the theory of Relativity propounded by Einstein. Priests, Pundits and all varieties of idealists have hailed it as the conclusive proof of the unreality of the universe and of the existence of a transcendent "Absolute". They contend that thanks to this theory, Motion, Space and Time have been proved to be merely subjective-relative concepts. Yet this is only another instance of the pathetic attempt of such people to fit scientific discoveries into an outworn idealist frame and work and preserve their fond illusions. What then is the revolution that Einstein has worked out?

The theory of Relativity starts with the statement that motion of matter and its measurement are always relative. The situation of the individual observer, his own motion during the period of measurement, the location of the datum line or point from which measurement is made and its motion during the period of measurement are facts which have to be taken into consideration in formulating a conception of motion. The observation of the motion of planets involves the recognition of the fact that the observer on earth is himself in perpetual motion. In our attempt to make adjustment for this fact we are forced to make a measurement relative to the sun which itself is in motion. Imagine the apple of classical physics falling from a tree at a time when a cyclone is sweeping through the space concerned. The initial motion of the apple resulting from the motion of the earth, the velocity of the cyclone, the motion of the earth during the falling period of the apple, the motion of the sun during the same period and the myriad movements in space have all to be

accounted for by an observer in a star outside the solar system and, even yet, the measurement is relative to the movement of the star. But this does not mean that motion is unreal or that it is only a subjective concept. It only means that motion alone is real, that everything in the world is in motion and that 'existence' always involves 'relation'. The famous materialist Engels declared long ago, in 1878, in his book *Anti-Duhring*, as follows: "Motion is the mode of existence of Matter. Never anywhere has there been matter without motion, nor can there be. Motion in Cosmic space, mechanical motion of smaller masses on the various celestial bodies, the motion of molecules as heat or as electrical or magnetic currents, chemical combination or disintegration, organic life—at each given moment each individual atom of matter in the world is in one or other of these forms of motion or in several forms at once. All rest, all equilibrium, is only relative, and only has meaning in relation to one or other definite form of motion."

The metaphysical postulates of Newton have broken down with the advancement of physics and what remains of the grand system built up by him is only his vast empirical observations of natural phenomena, supplemented, corrected and synthesised into new theories. Newton's First Law stated that every body persists in its state of rest or of uniform motion in a straight line except in so far as it is acted on by force. At the back of this was the idea that nothing can change of itself, that the motion visible in the universe is the result of an original push off given by the lord of creation to matter which up to then was slumbering in absolute stillness. Today these ideas are exploded beyond repair. Imagine a stone lying on the moon. While it is at rest to an observer on that celestial body, it is in mo-

tion for an observer on earth. Nobody is at rest in this universe and "unfortunately there is no method of detecting when a body is at rest." "Rest is only a relative term—rest in this room, on the Earth. What applies to rest applies equally to straight line motion. As seen from the moon such a motion will look very different from its appearance when seen from the earth." (H. Levy). Take again the idea of "force" involved in the First Law of Newton. The stone on the moon would under this law appear to be under the influence of force to an observer on earth and to be at rest to an observer on the moon. This law is thus found to be of limited validity and to involve "such animistic ideas like 'force' and such arbitrary and isolated systems like absolute rest and steady motion." (Levy). The metaphysical notions of 'inertia' and 'original push off' have today no scientific basis and have to be discarded. Einstein leaves out God and substitutes an active for a passive conception of inertia. That is to say, when Newton began with the supposition that nothing changes of itself. Einstein supposed the opposite—that everything is changing of itself and only confines its changes to particular directions under pressure of the counter-changes of everything else." (Jackson).

Newton enunciated the law that every particle in the universe attracts every other particle with a force which is universally proportional to the square of the distance between them. As a special instance of this law, the weights of bodies have been described as the forces with which they are attracted towards the centre of the earth. It has been discovered that this generalisation does not hold true for infinitely small molecular distances or for infinitely great nebular distances. This and several other facts unexplainable by this law have led to Einstein's discovery that weight and other phenomena of gravitation are not due to any mysterious "attraction" supposed to exist within matter but due to the motion of matter. Here again ma-

terialism has come out triumphant.

Space and time have been conceived by Newton as abstract entities completely independent of the unfolding process in Nature and as absolutely unrelated to each other. Though many scientific facts have been discovered which show space and time as co-existing complementary systems extracted from the changing world process, Edington and some others still toy with the old metaphysical conception of Newton. "Time merely shows itself by the continuous registration of the same event (the tick of the pendulum) between successive larger events. There is only one direction to Time, viz., that in which the number registered increases." (Levy). In his book "Nature of the Physical world" Edington suggests that the time series or the direction of time may be reversible and that human beings may remain unaware of this. This involves the idea that Time is not a quality of the universe but a mythical abstract entity in which the latter moves and unfolds its process. The fact that mathematical equations describing ordinary mechanical processes of Nature, excluding heat process could be interpreted equally well if time were reversed seems to give a specious validity to this suggestion. These equations hold equally true for the world machine running forwards or running backwards. For instance the equation for the motion of the earth round the sun is the same whether it is moving in its present direction and time is increasing positively or in the opposite direction and time is increasing negatively. Edington has to requisition the aid of the Law of Entropy to overcome this apparent indeterminacy. This law states that "as Time increases the amount of heat-energy available for the performance of useful work diminishes. Thus if a series of bodies is at different temperatures, so that a machine could be run by allowing heat to pass from warmer bodies to colder ones, the energy available in this way would continually decrease, the distribution of heat becoming more and more uniform.

... Before and after would correspond to greater and smaller capacity of a system to perform work in virtue of its irregular heat distribution." (Levy). But to suggest that only by means of an experiment in accordance with this law are we enabled to mark a distinction between events Before and After is to suggest that experimenters were ignorant of the order in which their apparatus was set up and of whether their observations were taken before or after the experiment." "Time and Times now indissolubly associated are given to us in the unfolding processes we encounter. They represent the recognition by mankind that these processes occur and the process involves order. . . . The order of the events is imposed on us and is common to us all. It is truly impersonal; and without this identity in order we could not use the conception of Time in science at all. That is a feature mankind has found and has to accept. If the ordinary mathematical equations as they are usually formulated fail to embody this feature of the time-sequence, that is a weakness of mathematics and has nothing whatever to do with the fact that man is directly aware of the order in the time series." (Levy). Time is neither a subjective concept nor is it something independent of the universe. It is a real quality of the universe and not the latter's pre-condition. Eddington's idealism is only a dead horse.

Einstein has shown that certain properties of bodies can be understood only if we take into consideration their position in time sequence along with their position in space; and he has worked out equations incorporating, besides the three dimensions of space, a fourth dimension of time. The inter-relationship of space and time as complementary co-existing systems abstracted from the same world process has been demonstrated. But this relationship does not deny the validity of the distinction between them. As long as each of them is measured from a practically given point in the other (we measure space describ-

ed by a body in a given time-interval) they cannot be identical. Space-time is not a unity from which the distinction (the opposition) between the two categories can be taken out. Further, as long as practical life encounters nothing to destroy the validity of space as a real quality of the universe, it is also a reality. Space and time are thus realities in opposition and unity at the same time. The conclusion is irresistible that Einstein's discoveries have not given any proofs for the assertion that motion, space and time are merely subjective-relative concepts and not objective realities. In fact they have only discredited the idealism of Eddington, Jeans and others.

The progress of science has been revolutionary during the last three decades, but every new discovery, every new synthesis is only a fresh nail driven into the coffin of idealism. The prevailing mood of pessimism and mysticism among certain sections of scientists, causing the present crisis in science, has no justification in the empirical facts of science. It is only an indication of the fact that scientists themselves as individuals are not immune from the class-ideas and moods prevailing in society at large.

* * *

THE NEW LORDS PRAYER

(According to Professor Eddington who claims God is a kind of Mathematical formula).
o

Our Formula which art in the Fourth dimension, hallowed by Thy Sins. Thy tangent come. Thy radius vector be done, in logarithms as it is in spherical trigonometry. Give us this day our daily binomial theorem, and forgive us our miscalculations as we forgive those who have erroneously triangulated our position, and lead us not into faulty calculus, but deliver us from quaternion errata, for Thine are the circumference and the radius and the "pi".

For relatively infinite temporal extension.

Q. E. D.
(From the Free Thinker)

THE OBSTACLES TO RATIONALISM IN INDIA

BY

Dr. C. L. D'AVOINE

One must be very stout-hearted and possess an unbounded optimism to work enthusiastically for the cause of Rationalism in India. The reasons for this are the well-nigh insurmountable difficulties which beset the way of workers in that field here—the diversity of religions, the peculiar religio-social customs of the people, their mystical tendencies, their conservative disposition, the dependence, poverty and illiteracy of the great majority, are some of the causes which make India a poor soil, indeed, for the cultivation of Rationalism..

The diversity of creeds with the appalling superstitions which pass for religion, the infatuation of people for religion and the influence of priests over them are the most serious obstacles in the way. In India people still believe that religion is the most important business in life and to be deprived of the ministry of the priest is the greatest calamity in the world! All the activities of the people are, therefore, spent in fulfilling religious obligations—attending mosques, temples and churches, pilgrimages, celebrating festivals and so forth, over which a good deal of money is wasted.

In a country where there is a great diversity of religion like India, it is difficult to attack orthodoxy with effect. An attack on a particular creed would leave the followers of another creed perfectly indifferent. In the West such is not the case; an attack on Christianity would interest most believers in it and would invite discussion.

Let any one, for instance, attack Hinduism. A follower of Islamism would probably be pleased at this, while an attack on his own religion would raise his fury and provoke his strong resentment. Every Christian in India, however ignorant, is perfectly certain that all the other creeds he sees around

him are false, except his own which he believes is the true one. The truth is that most people here, no matter to what creed they belong, hardly know the very essence of their religion. They follow it because they were born in it, because they have been told from childhood that it is the true one and because they desire social and political advantages by belonging to it.

In India, everybody believes in the duality of existence—that old erroneous belief which only a knowledge of biology and the science of evolution can dispel. This is the cause of the mysticism of the Indians and the reason why they spend their time in metaphysical speculations. It is true that the belief in the existence of the soul and a hereafter is still widespread in the West especially among people who are imperfectly educated. There, however, education is spreading and wherever the theory of evolution is taught, people realize that the old doctrine is not universally accepted and that science teaches quite a different thing.

Here, the case is different; so imbued are people with the belief in the existence of the soul, that we see many educated people seriously discussing the question of re-incarnation and doing their utmost to keep this belief alive. Theosophy thrives for the same reason, and every religious charlatan who trades on this belief is listened to with respect and admiration. It should be the first attempt of the rationalist propagandist to teach the errors of this dualism which is at the core of all the religious systems of the world.

Whilst Christians and Mahomedans here are extremely bigoted and narrow-minded and do not tolerate a discussion of their creeds, the Hindus, it must be said, are not generally so. Many of

them welcome a discussion on religion. They imagine that Hinduism is so satisfying and harmonizes so well with the scheme of things that it embraces all the knowledge, wisdom and experience of mankind. There are many here who believe that the writers of the Vedas anticipated all the modern knowledge and modern thought and that even the science of evolution is clearly explained in the Hindu Sacred Scriptures.

One can easily realize this by talking to a learned Hindu on the subject. Though, of course, all this is pure exaggeration, a discussion with learned Hindus on religion and philosophy cannot fail to impress one that these people are past masters in the art of spinning words. It would interest one to see how they explain away and reconcile the most absurd dogmas of Hinduism and their belief in its strange deities with a flow of verbiage that would bewilder any sober student. One cannot but be amazed at the casuistry and sophism of these pundits before whom their conferees, the Jesuits and Dominicans of the Roman Catholic Church, would dwindle into insignificance.

They will reconcile and harmonize the most curious beliefs of their creed with an assurance that leaves one gasping. While doing so, they will have the greatest pity and contempt for the obtuseness of their interlocuter. They can explain the deep spiritual meaning which every hideous idol represents. They understand all the hidden truths that every senseless ceremony symbolizes, and will justify the fetichism of the ignorant villagers just as easily as they would try to explain the philosophical meaning of a particular belief.

This strange teaching of Hinduism explains why one finds learned and respectable Hindus, many of them eminent in their own sphere of life, piously celebrating such festivals as those of Ganpati and Maruti, the monkey god. They will tell one that those gods with their gro-

tesque appearances represent some hidden truths and inspire them with such spiritual graces that only a true believer can appreciate.

At the same time, one must candidly admit that it will not do to examine these sorts of things here too closely when one remembers that in the West, in rural districts among educated and ignorant folk, there is a good deal of belief and practices which are as stupid and idolatrous.

Another reason why even emancipated and highly educated Hindus are reluctant to become Rationalists openly is that many of their social customs are intricately mixed up with religion. As the Hindus are of a very strongly conservative nature, they are loath to disturb the existing state of things and cause distress and pain to their believing relations and friends. They would rather countenance things they no longer believe in than introduce innovations and changes that rationalistic ideas generally suggest.

As regards the Mahomedans in India, it is agreed on all hands that they are very backward and ignorant. They are mostly fanatical by nature and do not tolerate any criticism of their creed. It is, therefore, dangerous to talk of rationalism with them; moreover, in their present state of intelligence, it would be a pure waste of time.

These Mahomedans look upon religion as the highest culture of their civilization. It is the ambition of every Mahomedan to be considered pious in his community and he strives by all means to appear so outwardly. The few educated ones among them, knowing this, act their part well and they take full advantage of this to become leaders for political ends. Islamism, like Christianity, is an intolerant creed and only sound education can succeed in opening the eyes of these people to the errors of their creeds.

The Christians in India are in a small minority. There is still a good deal of illiteracy among them and those among them who have received some sort of education are indebted for this to their missionary teachers. As one may guess, their education has been all one-sided. They have drunk deeply in the erroneous teaching of these people and are, therefore, narrow-minded and bigoted. These missionaries have certainly succeeded in making them distrust science and directing their education in certain channels not likely to endanger their creed. These Christians are descended from Hindu ancestors of the humbler classes—They have certainly gained much by becoming Christians, as it has raised their social status and rapproached them somewhat to the ruling classes here. They have also inherited all the instincts of their Hindu ancestors and in religious questions this is apparent at once. It is also doubtful, only with a few exceptions, whether they are intellectually fitted to rise above the present condition in matters religious and

social. Not until they receive a sound scientific education and are trained to think for themselves, can one be sure whether they are of the stuff to become Rationalists. For the present they are a priest-ridden lot and are likely to remain so for a long time to come.

The Parsis form a progressive and enlightened community here, small though it is. Rationalism is more likely to succeed among them though the community is still full of stiff-necked bigots who possess enough of power and influence to retard the progress of modern culture and modern thought among the more advanced.

It is the firm belief of the writer that Rationalism in India, as elsewhere, can only progress when schools and colleges managed by experienced Rationalists are opened to teach the young early and prevent superstitions being firmly rooted in their plastic minds. Those who have the cause at heart should work to that end.

Will anyone claim that the passages upholding slavery have liberated mankind? Are we indebted to polygamy for our modern homes? Was religious liberty born of that infamous verse in which the husband is commanded to kill his wife for worshipping an unknown god?

I insist that these things are not true. I insist that the real God, if there is one, never commanded man to enslave

his fellowmen, never told a mother to kill her babe, never established polygamy, never urged one nation to exterminate another, and never told a husband to kill his wife because she suggested the worship of another god.

From the aspersions of the pulpit, from the slanders of the church, I seek to rescue the reputation of the Deity.

Ingersoll.

DIDEROT, THE ATHEIST

(Translated from "*L'Idée Libre*" Paris)

BY

R. D. KARVE

LIFE OF DIDEROT

Diderot was born at Langres in 1713. His father, cutlery manufacturer, was a man of some means and so he wanted to give him what is called a "liberal profession". In this hope, he sent him to a Jesuit School, where his rich intelligence and eagerness to work brought him great success and many prizes. At the age of twelve, he was sent to the College d'Harcourt at Paris, which also was a Jesuit school.

When young Denis had finished his studies, his father asked him to choose either the bar or the ecclesiastical profession, but he rejected both. Then his father proposed medicine, but he refused straight away, saying that he 'did not want to kill anybody.'

The financier Randon engaged him as a tutor, but he stayed there only a few months and had to live on a moderate income afterwards. About 1742, he made the acquaintance of Mlle. Anne Toinette Champion (Nenette), whom he married in 1743. For his living, he translated a History of Greece, a Dictionary of Medicine and Shaftsbury's Essay on Merit and Virtue, for a publisher.

In 1749, he was entrusted with the publication of the famous Encyclopaedia with the help of d'Alembert. In the course of this work, all kinds of misfortunes happened to him. He was imprisoned; d'Alembert left him; the Jesuits persecuted him because he did not ask them to edit the theological portion; the printer did not stick to his proofs and suppressed some parts and altered others without his knowledge. Fathers fulminated from their pulpits against this "monstrous" work; the Archbishop of Paris took him to task and the King himself opposed the publication of the work. In

spite of all this, however, the work did appear in the end.

Diderot had in the meanwhile contracted a liaison with Mme. de Puisieux. To earn some money for her, he wrote the "*Pensees Philosophiques*" (Philosophical thoughts). On this, Pierre Hardy, the curate of his parish denounced him at once as an impious freethinker. The police report on it told the King that he was a very dangerous man who spoke of sacred mysteries with contempt. And the Parliament, when the matter was brought before it, condemned the book to be burnt.

In 1749, again to supply money to the same lady, Diderot published his "*Letter on the Blind*". For his atheism, the King had him imprisoned, but on the intervention of some friends, he was let go after 100 days. In the meanwhile, he had quarrelled with Mme. de Puisieux.

In 1756, Mlle. Volland was presented to him, and this led to a passionate friendship which lasted to the death of both the lovers. These two liaisons did not prevent Diderot from living with his wife and daughter. He even constantly showed himself "the best of fathers and had a sincere affection and great esteem for his wife."

Once the family found itself in great distress and to get out of it, Diderot was obliged to sell his collection of books. The Empress of Russia bought it for £15,000 in 1765 and appointed him to take care of them on an yearly salary of £1,000. For two years, this annuity was intentionally left unpaid, but at the end of this period, the ambassador of Russia paid Diderot £50,000. He was thus paid in advance for 50 years.

Wishing to thank the Czarina for this generosity, the philosopher left for Russia in 1773. He stayed there for six months and drew up for the Empress Catherine a plan of education, in which primary education was compulsory, free and secular. "Let there be no priests among the teachers," he said, "they are professionally rivals of the secular power and their morality is narrow and depressing." He added that children should also find books and bread at school.

After a fairly long sojourn in Holland, he returned to Paris in 1774 and died in 1784.

2. Diderot Died a Freethinker.

The eve of his death, he received some friends and said to them: "The first step in philosophy is unbelief." The next day, the curate of Saint-Sulpice went to see him. His daughter Mme. de Vandeuil says: "He received him cordially, praised him for his charity to the poor, but refused to confess, and said simply, 'you must admit that it will be an impudent piece of deceit.'"

His wife would have given her life to convert him, but "she would rather have died than press him to commit a single act which could be regarded as a sacrilege. Persuaded that my father would never change his opinion, mother wished to save him from persecution and never left him alone with the curate. Both of us were there to guard him."

So Diderot died as he had lived. Science had been his religion all his life and it was like an impenitent philosopher, without capitulation, without the slightest retraction of his works, that he left this valley of tears. In spite of his reputation and his numerous friends, his obsequies were very simple. His family did not forget that he had always made fun of solemn and ostentatious burials. "The dead do not hear bells," he makes one of his characters say. "Rotting under marble or rotting under earth is rotting all the same."

3. Diderot's Kind Heart.

If Diderot's intelligence was remarkable, his kindness was equally so. He could never refuse anything to anybody. He wrote prefaces gratis for authors who came to him, speeches for mediocre orators and letters for illiterate persons. One day, a man came to ask him to write an advertisement for a pomade which made hair grow. He did it though he laughed. Another young man, whom he had obliged a good deal, brought him a manuscript and asked him to annotate it. When Diderot read it, he found that it was an attack on himself, his works and his fads. "Why are you attacking me?" he asked. "I need money", said the young man, "and I thought you would pay me for not printing this". "Bad idea", said Diderot, "but take this to the Duke of Orleans. He is a bigot and hates me because I am an atheist. Dedicate it to him and he will pay you generously". "But I don't know the Duke," said the young man, "and how does one write the dedicatory epistle?" "That is nothing," said Diderot, "I will draw it up for you". After this, the young man went to the Duke and was largely paid, and came back to thank Diderot.

Another affair. The Duke de la Vrilliere had abandoned one of his mistresses, and the poor woman, after selling all her jewelry, found herself without means. She asked the Duke to relieve her distress, but received no reply. Then she came to Diderot. The philosopher prepared a touching letter to the Duke, in which he made her say that "she had now only his portrait left and would be obliged to sell that to get some bread." This had the desired effect. Later, she wanted a place in the Incurables' Home. Diderot made her write to the Duke, "If you do not help me, I will have myself carried to the hospital and will die there with your letters in my hand, and they will then be returned to you from there." She got the place she wanted and died there.

Is this not enough to show that one can be at the same time atheistic and generous, that morality can exist without the idea of Divinity and of future recompense and that one can be altruistic and disinterested without these?

4. Religion cannot do any good, but Causes terrible ravages in Society.

The influence of Jesuits made itself felt for quite a long time with Diderot. Before professing atheism, he was for some time a theist and even a pantheist. When however he began to deny that a supreme intelligence has ordained everything for any general or particular good, he repeated at every opportunity that "wherever the existence of God is admitted, the natural order of moral duties is upset and morals are corrupted.

In his "Conversations of a Philosopher with Mme. la Marechale," he says that religion is not a motive for doing good, not disbelief a motive for doing evil. One may be naturally disposed to do good and experience may convince one that after all, to be happy in the world, it is better to be an honest man than a rascal. As for the belief that there must be something to frighten people from bad acts which do not come under the law, religion is ineffective. In no nation and at no time has religion

served as a basis for conduct. The gods of the Romans, Jupiter, Venus, Mercury, were most dissolute rascals, which did not prevent the conquerors of the world from being honest people. In Diderot's opinion, "We are not worth less because we are pagans, nor more if we are Christians." To destroy religion and put nothing in its place would only be suppressing a terrible prejudice. He purposely uses the word "terrible", because he is conscious of the ravages which religion has caused in the past.

"Consider", says he, "that it has created and it perpetuates the most violent antipathy between nations. There is not a single Musulman who does not imagine that he would please God and the Holy Prophet by exterminating all Christians, who, on their side, are hardly more tolerant. Consider that it creates and perpetuates dissensions in the same country, which lead to bloodshed. Consider that it creates in society, between citizens, or in the same family between near relatives, the most violent and constant hatred. Christ said that he had come to separate husband and wife, mother and children, brother and sister, friend and friend; and his prediction has been only too faithfully fulfilled." (To be continued).

REASON

The Journal of The Rationalist
Association of India.

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Bombay.

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*All contributions should be addressed to the
Editor "REASON" Jagjivan Mansions, 13, New
Bhatwadi, Bombay 4, and should reach the editor on
or before the 15th of each month.*

*The writers of the articles in this journal are
themselves responsible for the views expressed and do
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*For Advertisement rates etc. Please apply to the
Business Manager "REASON" care of the Rationa-
list Association of India. Concession rates to members.*

CORRESPONDENCE

*Letters not relating to "Reason" should, please, be
addressed to the Secretaries, R. A. I., and not to the
Editor.*

A. Usmani (Agra, U. P.). Many
thanks for trying to introduce "Reason"
in your local library. Letters like yours
go a great way in encouraging us in our
efforts.

O. B. R. Dickey (Sialkot). Thanks
for your suggestions. Self-criticism is
better than mutual recriminations. It is
inadvisable to render even an indirect
support to communalism, by asking
Hindoos to write about the fallacy of
Mahomedanism or vice versa. Criticism
of one religion, from the point of view
of another is not likely to be impartial.
It is infinitely better for Rationalists to
think for themselves and criticise all re-
ligions impartially. Further, we cannot
expect Mullahs and Pandits to expound
their rival creeds in the columns of a
journal which stands "to combat all re-
ligious and social beliefs and customs
that cannot stand the test of Reason".

Roshan Mahomed (London). Thanks
for all that you are doing for us. Copies
of "Reason" are being sent.

We thank all those who have sent
us letters, congratulating us on the re-
appearance of "Reason" and its new
get-up. Such letters make us realize that
one does not work in vain.

AT THE SECRETARY'S TABLE

None can sufficiently realize the ex-
tent of our pleasure at finding that our
efforts are being appreciated.

It is our intention in these columns
to keep our members in touch with the
activities and intentions of the Executive
Committee.

We wish to do many things, but at
present the energies of the Committee
are directed towards establishing the As-
sociation on a solid basis.

The first thing to be done is to get
more members. Now and then we find
that there are many rationalists in India
who are quite unaware of the existence
of our Association and our Journal.

If only each of our members tries
and gets three new members, it will be a
great help to us. With five hundred
members, there will be no need to make
repeated appeals for funds.

With five hundred members, which
will mean Rs. 2,500/- yearly, we can

carry on splendidly. With this amount we can have two public lectures a month and even organize lectures in other parts of India, issue ten different pamphlets every year for free distribution, have a library and a place for members to meet every week, and, of course, publish "Reason" regularly every month.

All these activities will mean getting more members and strengthening our ranks to fight the gathering forces of irrationalism and bigotry in this country.

Among the suggestions received from some of our members are the following and we request our members to let us know what they think of them:—

1. That the annual subscription be reduced to Rupees three.
2. That our present subscription be received in quarterly or half-yearly instalments.

* * *

Our Treasurer, Mr. D. R. D. Wadia, will be leaving for New York on the 25th of March, 1937. After a stay of about three weeks in England, he will be in New York, by the middle of May. Here is a fine opportunity for our friends in U. S. A. to get in personal contact with him. His address in New York will be c/o The American Steel Export Co. Inc., Radio Division, 347, Madison Avenue.

He has been appointed our representative for America during his stay there.

Dr. Geo. Coelho has kindly consented to act as Honorary Treasurer during his absence.

* * *

We are thankful for the following donations:—

D. J. N. Lee, Esq., I.C.S., Saugor, C.P., Rs. 5. J. R. Labelle, Esq., Bombay, Rs. 5. Lt.-Col. O. B. R. Dickey, Sialkot, Rs. 15. From a Rationalist, Rs. 15.

We are also thankful for renewals of subscription to the various members and to those of our friends who have joined the Association:—

Lt. R. M. Bilimoria, Bolarum, Decan. Lt.-Col. K. C. Sanjana, I.M.S., Poona. Captain N. Wood-Smith, Ootacamund. A. M. Zawawi, Esq., Karachi. J. M. Cooper, Esq., Lahore. A. P. de Costa, Esq., Bombay. Dr. S. R. Jogekar, Bombay. Mr. S. B. Gadgil, Bombay. M. I. Ahmadi, Esq., Ahmedabad. D. J. N. Lee, Esq., I.C.S., Saugor. J. R. Labelle, Esq., Bombay. Jamshed Nowroji Patuck, Esq., Bombay. Lt. Col. O. B. R. Dickey, Sialkot. Dr. D. D. Karve, D.Sc., Poona. P. N. Agate, Esq., Bombay. S. Halder, Esq., Namkum P.O. (Ranchi). Peter Pereira, Esq., Ahmedabad. Akbar Frosh, Esq., Bombay. Dr. J. J. Asana, Ahmedabad. J. S. Warden, Esq., Bombay. Dr. C. R. Athavle, Bombay. Sam M. Neksautkhan, Esq., Surat. Roshan Mahomed, Esq., London. V. V. Sohoni Esq., Karachi. M. P. Pai, Esq., I.C.S., Kumbakonam, S. India.

* * *

No copies of "Reason" have been sent by V.P.P. this time, but the next issue will be sent by V.P.P. to those whose subscriptions have ended. But we hope members will send along their subscriptions within this month.

ABRAHAM SOLOMON,

Joint Hony. Secretary.

ERRATTA

We regret there were a few misprints in our last issue of "Reason".

Page 3 left column, tenth line of the 2nd para reads—"One would think it would be possible at the present day" It should be "one would think it would be impossible."

Page 7 left column, third line from the bottom "one for surrendering all faith and reasoning"; it should be "all faith in reasoning. . . ."

Same page, right column, second line—"The crises in science has forced"; it should be "The crisis in society has forced. . . .".

REVIEWS OF REASON BY OTHER PAPERS

"REASON"—Chronicle, 5th Feb. 1937

"Reason," the journal of the Rationalist Association of India, has made a welcome reappearance, after a period of suspension, under the able editorship of the well-known rationalist, Mr. R. D. Karve. The current issue is characterized in its contents by the same catholic and unorthodox outlook which has ever been the aim of the Rationalist Association. The editorial comments and Dr. C. L. D'Avoine's notes review the recent world happenings and events from a rational stand-point and help to expose the superstition, the bigotry and the intellectual servility which, unfortunately, are still the features of the modern world. The other contents, too, aim at spreading the gospel of Reason in opposition to ages-old obscurantism and blind worship of the past. K. T. Chandy's article "Crisis in Science," deserves mention for its candour and intellectual approach. The extracts reproduced from the "Free Thinker", shed an altogether new light on the "Constitutional Crisis," which resulted in the abdication of Edward VIII and reveal the clerical intrigue, which was at the root of the whole affair. On the whole, "Reason" amply vindicates its appearance. It should be read by every one who is tired of dogmas and beliefs based on superstition and wishes to be guided only by the dictates of Reason.

SENTINEL

"REASON"—The Journal of the Rationalist Association of India. February 1937.

This number of the journal is a very welcome re-appearance after a lapse of a long period.

Whatever may have been the causes of this lapse, it was certainly the period

which witnessed the unleashing of the most ferocious forces of reaction known to contemporary society.

The most outstanding instances are Mussolini's rape of Abyssinia sanctified by the Pope, the revolting attempts of the Fascist rebels of Europe assisted by the clergy and the Moorish mercenaries to stem the tide of progress in Spain, the growth of an intensely perverted form of nationalism in Germany, the establishment of naked military dictatorship in Japan under the protecting shelter of the Throne and the Church, the extermination on a mass scale of political undesirables in Soviet Russia, the abdication of King Edward VIII forced upon by the effete aristocracy of West End and the hypocritical dignitaries of Westminster Abbey and in our own country the outbreak of religious bigotry and fanaticism, typified by the recent communal riots in Bombay.

No wonder then that reason has little chance to be listened to, amidst the deafening din of reaction bred by irrationalism.

It hence stands to the credit of the Rationalist Association of India to revive the publication of their journal, and thus make the voice of Reason however feeble to be heard at all costs. It is upto the Rationalists and all others of their way of thinking to strengthen this voice and make it finally prevail.

As the Editorial rightly observes, "Reason is to-day on trial—the most severe known in human history."

The Editor has also contributed a highly illuminating article on "Sex Education." Among other contributors of repute is of course the indefatigable Dr. C. L. D'Avoine, M.D., who had been intimately associated with the Journal dur-

ing its early career and ever since. He is one of the Vice-Presidents of the Rationalist Association of India.

The Editor is fortunate in having the assistance of Mr. K. T. Chandy, M.A., LL.B., one of the most brilliant and popular representatives of the younger generation. He is himself responsible for a very important article on "The Crisis in Science". Finally the Journal contains the re-print of an article in "Freethinker" dealing with the Abdication crisis from the pen of that famous champion of Freethinking, Chapman Cohen.

It is to be sincerely hoped that this venture on the part of the Rationalist Association of India will get all the encouragement from the public which it deserves.

OLD COPIES OF "REASON"

Could any members supply us the following old copies of "Reason"? :—

1931—August and September.

1932—January.

The following old copies of "Reason" are available from the office of the Association at annas four each:—

1932—February, March, May, June, July, August and Sept.

1933—January, February, March, April, May, June, August, September, November, December.

1934—February, March, April, May, July, August, December.

1935—March, April.

- If you recognise Human Equality.
- If you desire Intellectual Liberty and Rational Freedom.
- If you hate Superstition, Priestcraft, Fanaticism, Bigotry and Hypocrisy.

Join

THE RATIONALIST ASSOCIATION of INDIA

which seeks :

"To combat all religious and social beliefs and customs that cannot stand the test of Reason and to endeavour to create a scientific and tolerant mentality among the people of this country."

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For further particulars please write to :—

The Secretaries,

Rationalist Association of India,

5-12, QUEEN'S ROAD,
BOMBAY 2.

Those who expect to reap the blessings of freedom
must, like men, undergo the fatigues of supporting it.

—Thomas Paine.

REASON

THE JOURNAL OF THE RATIONALIST ASSOCIATION OF INDIA

"TO COMBAT ALL RELIGIOUS AND SOCIAL BELIEFS AND CUSTOMS THAT CANNOT STAND THE
TEST OF REASON AND TO ENDEAVOUR TO CREATE A SCIENTIFIC AND TOLERANT MENTALITY
AMONG THE PEOPLE OF THIS COUNTRY." *"Object of the Rationalist Association of India."*

New Series.

APRIL 1937

No. 3.

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NOTES & HAPPENINGS

By Dr. C. L. D'AVOINE

The Parliament of Religions held its conference at Calcutta recently and was attended by a number of distinguished people from India and abroad. Many speeches were made and all the speakers stressed the fact that all religions are defective and that their articles of faith, creeds and dogmas have helped more than anything else to divide man from man and create barriers, hatred and dissensions in this world.

The aims and objects of the Parliament of Religions, it would appear, are to select the best in all religions, "the essence" as the speakers expressed it, unite them and form a meeting ground acceptable to all humanity. This, undoubtedly is a very ambitious scheme,

and only likely to succeed in uniting some highly cultured and liberal minded enthusiasts. Why could they not all become Rationalists? Sooner or later they are bound to recognise that Rationalism is the only solution of the problem which they are trying to solve.

* * *

To judge by the results of the recent Legislative elections and the manner propaganda was made in favour of certain candidates, Bombay seems to take pride of place as the most communal and priest ridden centre in India.

Many candidates were successful not because they were the most deserving, but because they were rich though young and inexperienced; others because they belonged to certain castes and

communities numerous in Bombay; some others because they were considered to be the pillars of their respective religions and therefore were strongly supported by priests.

In the case of Mr. Joachim Alwa, it was reported that some of the priests of the Roman Catholic Church in the City and Suburbs threatened their parishioners that if they voted for Mr. Alwa they would all go to Hell. It is a sad reflection on the intelligence of many Christian voters here that communal question and the fear of priests influenced their votes against Mr. Alwa.

It is gratifying to note that the bi-centenary celebrations of Thomas Paine in Europe were a great success. Free thought owes a good deal to this great pioneer of Rationalism whose "Age of Reason" shook the foundations of the Christian Churches in the West.

It is noticeable that since Roman Catholicism is in a very parlous condition in Europe, the Pope of Rome is becoming more and more assertive. Every now and then he utters some childish nonsense which make sensible people laugh. His latest is the condemnation of Communism on the ground that this political doctrine is Atheistic and materialistic. Such, of course, is not the case; there are many communists in the West who are not atheists. The Pope confesses that he is afraid of Communism because he believes that it teaches that the soul does not exist, that matter is the only thing we know and that it rejects the idea of God. Since the Roman Catholic religion flourishes by teaching quite the opposite doctrines, it stands to reason that the Pope, who claims to be the representative of God on earth, should hate any doctrine which attempts to enlighten one on the question of the existence of God and the reasons why such an existence is doubtful, that the existence of the soul, as that religion teaches, is absolutely erroneous, and that matter is the only thing we know

and the spiritual world is only a product of the imagination. The metier of Pope would soon disappear with the general acceptance of such sensible views.

Regarding the idea of God, the Pope of course, would like everybody to accept without question what his Church teaches on the subject. It represents God as a capricious and cruel person who lives in the sky, revengeful and terrible and only ready to punish those who do not obey the Roman Catholic priests. Just listen to what the Spanish Primate, Cardinal Isidro Gomá, attributes the cause of the present Spanish Civil War. He recently declared in a pastoral letter that the Spanish Civil War is a tribulation visited upon Spain by God so that she may expiate her sins! If you and I happen to have a more decent idea about God than this Spanish Prelate, the Church of Rome at once would brand us as Atheists and enemies of religion. Personally the writer prefers to be called an Atheist rather than believe in such a God as some of these Roman Catholics picture.

At the same time, it will be recalled that Mahatma Gandhi and Mr. K. F. Nariman also expressed opinions similar to that Spanish Cardinal to account for the Quetta Earthquake. It is, indeed, the fashion of most pious people to accuse God of being the author of all the evils and terrible calamities that occur in this world. Their God, in His Holy anger, does not spare the innocents; He smites innocent women, children and beasts together with the sinful. Yet in His Omnipotence, He could easily spare the innocents. If a human being were to act as this God he would rightly be called a monster of iniquity; but poor God must silently suffer such accusations and cannot protest. To entertain such horrible ideas about God shows that His worshippers have a very mean opinion of Him. They believe Him capable of the most revolting and diabolical deeds just to satisfy his anger. The Christian

religion credits Him with having once upon a time desired nothing less than the blood of His only Son, in fact His Own, because a man and a woman are believed to have once offended Him very much by disobeying His Orders about the eating of a fruit. Only the blood of His Son could atone for this sin! The writer begs non-Christian readers to refrain from laughing at this.

* * *

Rationalism rightly teaches that man came to such a repulsive belief when he was a barbarian. He then believed that he was always surrounded by evilly disposed spirits who were only satisfied by the offering of blood for any imaginary transgressions against them. Rationalism also teaches that such spirits do not exist and that a God conceived in that sense also does not exist. Rationalism teaches that there is absolutely no evidence that any God, good or bad, is the cause of the terrible calamities that often visit this planet of ours. They are due to natural causes alone and only a careful study of Cosmic Laws can explain these things and reconcile man to his environment. It is quite natural that priests detest such teaching since they pose as mediators between man and an angry God, and to adopt such rational views about the universe would rapidly destroy their influence on people. It is for this reason that priests hate Rationalism and denounce it as an Anti-God doctrine which must be suppressed by all means.

* * *

By taking this into consideration, one can easily understand why the priests of all religions, especially the Christian priests, denounced, cursed and vilified Russia when that country resolutely undertook, by drastic measures if you like, to teach her people the right thing about God and the Universe in order to destroy the abominable and degrading superstitions that the Christian religion had spread in that country. Opinions differ as to the wisdom of the Soviets in adopting drastic measures to

wean the people from the baneful effects of the Christian teachings. They, for instance, turned most of the churches into schools and museums where scientific teaching was literally imported. Religion was discouraged, and the absurdities of Christian legends publicly ridiculed. The end has justified the means; the results have proved immensely beneficial and to day, impartial visitors to Russia testify that the intellectual progress of that country has been rapid and marvellous. Small wonder that the enemies of the Soviet are bewildered and confounded.

* * *

These same detractors of Russia now try to confound the issue. They want us to believe that the anti-God movement has been a dismal failure that the Soviet themselves have recognised it and that they are doing their utmost to restore the old state of things. As if this is possible!

The lying press is helping to broadcast this falsehood about Russia. It serves them and their supporters to make believe this as their one object is to show that Bolshevism has been a ghastly failure all round. This explains why in a local paper of the 15th March last, the following passage appeared, just for the consumption of its innocent and ill informed readers:—

“Anti-God Movement”.

“Yet another sign of Soviet anxiety to be deemed respectable is the freedom of worship guaranteed under the New Constitution. As a result the “Anti-God movement” shows signs of collapsing. The militant Godless League has suffered a severe drop in membership. So small has been the public response to the Soviet “Anti-God” drive that the Commissariat of Education has had to close five anti-religious movements for want of public patronage. Repression of religious opinion has invariably recoiled on the heads of its authors. The Soviet having sowed the wind of re-

pression are now reaping the whirlwind. On all fronts, the Soviet seem to be beating a strategic retreat. Religion which Lenin denounced as "the Opiate of the masses" is evidently regaining its hold on the people of Russia. What would Karl Marx say?"

As the above appeared in a paper notorious for its fanatical hatred of anything Soviet, whose editorial staff are mostly Roman Catholics, Christian Scientists and Bible Thumpers, one may say that it is for it a question of the Wish being Father to the thought. All the same it is a fine sample of the idiotic

stuff some people can utter about Russia. According to this paper the Soviet lost its respectability when they undertook to stamp out the debasing and harmful superstitions of their country and by attempting to teach their people useful knowledge. Russia, according to that organ is returning to respectability by now endeavouring to teach that God is the author of wars, earthquakes, pestilence, famine, inundation and all other evils that afflict this world; that ignorance is better than education and superstition, better than common sense. This, from the leading paper in Asia!

OUR FOURFOLD TASK

BY

FREDERICK J. GOULD

Though it is twenty-four years since I walked the streets of Bombay, and since I gave ethical talks to Indian youths, I still retain a very lively interest in the social and educational questions of India, and especially to Dr. D'Avoine, whom I met in 1913, I now offer cordial salute. I rejoice at the resurrection of the brave magazine "Reason".

In writing a few reflexions on the Fourfold Task of Rationalism, I venture to say that during the last 54 years I have tried to render service in each of these fields.

1. Attack on all theologies.

In 1882 I attacked the God-creeds. In 1887 I published satirical comments on God, Jesus and Satan, and was marked as a heretic by the Education Authority of London, and, even in 1937, that authority shuts out my books for youth from its schools. Anybody who reads the "Literary Guide" will note my perpetual assaults on Bible-worship and the

dull institutional mind of church and chapel. In this circle of Freethought, I recognise the need of aggressive action in India. It is a mistake of Western Rationalists to regard Christianity as the main theological barrier to progress. The various Indian theologies are more deeply rooted in social custom than the younger system of Christian priesthood. Hence, I look to India as the greatest field, in years to come, of Rationalist emancipation.

2. Unfolding the true history conception of history.

In my judgment, the two foremost thinkers in the 19th century were Charles Darwin and Auguste Comte. Darwin (d. 1882) revealed the biological forces that produced species of animals and culminated in Man. Comte (d. 1857) unrolled the story of human history and of the great moral and social values. This conception of History displaces the ideas of the Gods as creators. It discloses the glorious record of man's achievements in agriculture, forestry,

mining, exploration, seamanship; of crafts, inventions, machinery, commerce; of the arts (poetry, music, drama, dance, painting, sculpture, decoration, architecture, costume, gardening): of the physical and ethical sciences; of social organisation, and release from slavery, war, disease, poverty, and the growth of world unity. This story is the new Bible, the new Bhagavadgita. For one, Rationalism is the path leading to this conception.

3. The sifting of values.

I do not belong to that section of Free thought which treats all the ancient Faiths as mere superstition. I have examined all the principal scriptures and systems of myth,—Egyptian, Greek, Roman, Jewish, Confucian, Buddhist, Hindu, Zoroastrian, Muslim, Christian, and I find noble ideas of kindness, justice, trustworthiness, honour, duty, service, in them all. Even the theological and miracle- tales enshrined ethical lessons. But to retain the gods and miracle-legends in 1937 as vital parts of our world-view is now superstition. That is to say, conceptions that were once helpful to man have become an exaggeration, a burden, a hindrance. Let us sweep away the hindrances, but preserve the best teachings of Socrates, Buddha, Zoroaster, Isaiah, and the other great teachers and prophets.

4. Education.

By education I mean training youth (to about age 21) in the whole civilized world to understand the grand lines and tendencies of social evolution (history) and to take useful and joyful part in the service of love, order and progress. It has been my privilege to assist in promoting this aim in international Congresses (1908 to 1934), in London, Hague, Geneva, Berlin, Paris, Rome and Krakow (Poland), and in tours in India and America. To my mind, real democracy is not possible except on the basis of such education. I gladly strive for economic freedom and the escape from poverty; but here again, the true social liberty (in Russia, Spain, Italy, Germany, India, England, and all the rest) cannot be achieved except by the aid of this general humanist education. For me, the attack on the theologies is only the first step in the climax that ascends to education universal.

Armored,
Woodfield Avenue,
Ealing, London W. 5.
February, 1937.

(*Frederick Gould is a septuagenarian veteran of the Rationalist cause in England.)

RELIGION

BY

T. GODIWALA

"Hinduism at stake," "Christianity on trial," "Islam challenged by the Kafirs" and such other cries of "Religion in Danger" are of late, raised from high pedestals. The priests, the Pundits and the Mullahs are always ready to strike terror, or create a panick amongst the illiterate masses, in order to serve their own ends. Such outbursts of alarm are not infrequent from other quarters as well, and this tendency was strikingly manifest during the last elections in the city. One wonders and asks oneself what is the great purpose behind the moral teachings, high-sounding sermons, the exuberent flow of words and the intellectual jugglery of the leaders of religion, throughout the Ages? One is forced to ask oneself, what is religion after all?

A number of definitions of religion have been formulated and scores of them are still being added by new thinkers. A common element and almost a fundamental factor behind all religions, when looked at historically, is a belief in some supernatural power. Sir E. B. Taylor says that the minimum definition of Religion, is the belief in spiritual beings. Sir J. G. Frazer, considers God as an integral part of Religion and further defines it as, "A propitiation or conciliation of powers superior to men which are believed to direct and control the course of nature and human life". He qualifies religious attitude as consisting in "such manifestation of feeling, thought and action in regard to the *Sacred* (Italics are mine) as it is held to conduce to the welfare of the community or to that of individuals as members of the community". The German classical idealists have viewed it in their own different ways. The sum total of religion, according to Kant, is the sovereignty of the moral order. Schleiermacher rejected

Kant's moral theory of religion and sought its origin in the sense of piety. Hegel agreeing with none of them "exalted the intellectual aspect of religion, as the grasp of *Eternal Truth*" (italics are mine). A new perspective is held before us by sociologists and anthropologists. The command of the social group is at once the origin and the source of religion according to Durkheim. To reproduce Caird, "A man's religion is the expression of his ultimate attitude towards the universe, the summed-up meaning and purport of his whole consciousness of things." We find religion something different from what the sociologists define, in the sense, that their definitions are too narrow. History tells us stranger stories.

All religions that existed in the past or that exist to-day command us to put blind faith in the super-natural. But what is super-natural? It is Sacred. And what is sacred? The sacred is forbidden, the sacred is mysterious, the sacred is ancient and secret, the sacred is animate and potent. The dogmatic belief in the 'super-natural' cannot stand the test of reason and the 'sacred' cannot vindicate its existence under the severe trial and cross-examination by the intellect. The 'sacred' disappears in the vapoury clouds of secrecy and mysticism when put to this acid test.

Every religion—may it be old, orthodox, reactionary, modernised, reformed or improved—has a tissue of dogmas attached to it. One may implicitly obey all the ten commandments or read the New Testament every morning yet he is not a Christian if he defies the dogmas of Christianity. He may as well, like M. Gandhi, following the strict letter of the law, offer the left cheek when hit on the right one, yet he is not a pious Christian

so long as he does not accept the ridiculous and phantastic myths of the Christian religion. Question not the reality of the 'Gospel Truths' and raise no doubts against the virginhood of Mary or the birth of the whole human race out of the sin and fall of Adam and Eve, and you will be accepted as a good Christian. 'There is but one God and only one and Mohamed is the Prophet' shrieks the Muezzim, at the top of his voice. Blindly accept this dogma as absolute truth if you want to avoid the stigma of being called a Kaffir. And so will a Hindu in his turn uphold his own dogmas. He wants you to believe in the theory of birth and re-birth; in Sat-Yuga and Kali-Yuga; in the Trinity of Brahma-Vishnu-Mahesh, as the Creator, the upholder and the destroyer of the universe. The poor Jew waits for the Messiah and will probably wait till eternity for Him to come.

What is the implication behind these dogmas and what is the Rationalist's objection to them? The limited knowledge of human beings, his incapacity to fathom deep into the problems of evolution, his sense of awe and fear which is his heritage from his animal ancestors and the like, are responsible for creating in him this feeling of implicit obedience to and faith in such dogmas. Prof. Rudolph Otto, believes that man is endowed with a 'Sensus Numinis'—a sense of awe—which creates a longing for the sacred, the divine or something altogether different from human nature.

And this sense of awe is utilised by the upper strata of society in order to explain away the social and economic hierarchy and make religion a lever for exploitation. The theory of 'Karma' is a very apt illustration of this sinister motive of the upper classes to exploit the lower ones under a safe screen. Man reaps the fruits—good or bad—of his past actions in this life and similarly will reap the fruits of his present actions in the life after death. In order to perpetuate the social and political oppression and econo-

mic exploitation, the exploiters thus use the theory of 'Karma' and employ religion as their hand-maid. That is why a celebrated materialist calls religion "The opium of the People". The stronger of the two halves of the human race has followed the same practice of dominating over the weaker half and historically the origin of family can be proved to have been based on this principle of exploitation. It is not so much on the basis of the division of labour and its relative productivity that the Hindu Society was divided in four main castes as it was on the policy of the Brahmins, to maintain a superior and safer position.

How can one who understands the dialectical process of human history accept such tenets of religion—the tenets which talk in terms of absolute truth? Truth must always be conceived in relative terms. A truth of yesterday may become the half-truth of to-day and falsehood of to-morrow. What yesterday was still religion is no longer such to-day; what to-day is atheism will tomorrow be religion. Our ancestors who were worshippers of snake and stones, believed the thunder and lightning to be some supernatural and unexplainable phenomena. To-day we know that they are nothing but purely natural phenomena, which can be explained in so many clear and simple words. Newton's discovery of the laws of Gravitation was held as eternal truth by its contemporaries. Einstein with his new theory of Relativity has completely falsified Newton's theories. To say with Hegel that religion is "The Grasp of eternal truth" is therefore, a glaring mistake, for, the greatest truth is that there cannot be eternal truth. The quest of eternal truth is like a quest of a blind man for a non-existent black cat in a dark room. To conclude, then, every religion has dogmas and every dogma lays down an absolute truth. Therefore, a thinking, rational, clear and analytical mind can give no place to such a religion.

The other essential and inseparable

ingredient of religion, as previously stated, is the belief in the existence of God or similar mystical, supernatural, unquestionable, and unfathomable power. It is really strange of human-beings to go beyond things which they can clearly see, feel, smell or hear, in order to create chaos in their minds. A Theist asks an atheist "If you do not believe in the existence of God, who created you?" And the unhesitating reply of the atheist is "My father and mother". But who created your father and mother? The same questions and answers are repeated till the one or the other of them is tired. The atheist traces the whole history of evolution; he explains that the history of the earth as an independent spinning planet, is not a history of a few hundred or a few thousand years; it is the history of more than two hundred million years. The physical and astronomical scientists have proved this fact to a fairly convincing extent. The sun was a great blaze, revolving in space, and from the sun was flung a mass of matter which slowly cooled down and assumed the shape of earth as it is to-day. In a similar process was evolved the whole universe as it is. Around the earth itself was super-heated gas and vapour which were condensed into liquid forms and were spread on its surface. Due to the heat—that exists even to this day—within the bowels of the earth there were eruptions and earthquakes; all these physical and astronomical changes have shaped the earth as one finds it to-day.

But what about life? In the initial stages a small invisible protoplasm came into being. This was the origin of life. Small shell-fish, sea-worms and sea-scorpions were the living creatures in the prior stages of the existence of life. Then came the fishes and vegetable like seaweeds and mosses. The age of reptiles, the birds and the mammals—creatures of land—came in at a later stage. All this has been proved by scientists and anthropologists by excavating bones and by

analysing the old fossils. After the age of the mammals, we march to the age of the monkeys, apes and sub-men. Spencer, Darwin and other scientists may disagree here and there in fixing the order of creation but all of them are unanimous on the point that human being is the result of evolution. He was not thrown on the surface of the earth from the sky.

The theist once again raises his head to put the question; "Who created the sun (the great Blaze) and the life?" And he triumphantly replies, "It was God". The problem is not so easy for him as he thinks. The atheist in his turn puts the same question to the theist, 'who created God?'

"He was self-created", replies the theist. Here is the triumph of the atheist who holds his own and says that the sun (the great blaze) and the life were self-existent and he proves this through the process of evolution. He has ample of geological and astronomical evidence before him, whereas the theist can only take a stand on imagination and intuition. When one thing can specifically and concretely be proved why should we go to prove otherwise for whose defence we can put forth only flimsy grounds? It is clear that matter was first and that it was self-existent.

How then did the idea of God come into being? Science is much advanced to-day. One can explain every phenomenon on the basis of science. Man has conquered Nature much more than it was conquered in the past and still the conquest continues. Impossibilities of yesterday have become realities of to-day. During the dark ages, when man had very little control over the forces of nature, he was primarily guided by awe and fear. His Gods in those ages were creatures like snakes and ferocious animals which threatened the security of his life. They were the products of the fear-instinct in man. Later, with the advance of years his God became more kind and humane, and adopted more pleasing shapes and attires. Ultimately he began to see God

in his own image with immense powers to control the whole of the universe. "Such as are a man's thoughts and dispositions, such is his God; so much worth a man has, so much and no more has his God. Consciousness of God is self-consciousness; Knowledge of God is self-knowledge. By his God thou knowest the man and by the man his God; the two are identical." Whether one sees him in this shape or that or in no shape at all, is immaterial for our purpose. In whatever form he sees him, the belief in the existence of God is based on fear and ignorance.

The motive-force behind these arguments is the presentation of the case that religion should have no place in a scientific view of life. Towards this end, one has also to prove that neither rationalism

nor materialism is a religion. As stated during the first portion of this article, one cannot give, a purely moral or social definition of religion, without involving a dogma or a God, or a necessary ingredient of it. Rationalism puts forth no dogma nor does it shape its god. The materialist too would object to calling his notion of religion, without involving a scientific attitude towards life; Materialism similarly defines an ideology which is based on well-tested facts. Rationalist and Materialist conclusions are open to change and modifications without ceremonies. Neither rationalism nor materialism insists on an absolute truth realising fully well the relative nature of truth. It is fit to close with the famous verdict "Man has his highest being, his God in himself. The beginning, middle, and end of religion is MAN."

DIDEROT, THE ATHEIST-2

(Continued from last issue)

(Translated from "L' Idée Libre" Paris)

BY

R. D. KARVE

IS RELIGION USEFUL?

If on the one hand, religion does not lead us to do good, and on the other hand, it causes terrible ravages in society, what useful role can we attribute to it? It brings us hope of a future life, say the believers. And they add "Why take from us this hope, which seems to us so consoling and sweet?" To this question, Diderot replies that it is not reasonable to believe that we shall see when we shall have no eyes, hear when we shall have no ears, think when we shall have no head, love when we shall have no heart, feel when we shall have no senses; that we shall exist when we shall be nowhere; that we shall be something without position and without magnitude."

To the supposedly embarrassing

question "Who made this world?", Diderot replies, "Ask an Indian why the world remains suspended in air, he will reply that it rests on the back of an elephant. And what does the elephant rest on? On a tortoise. And who supports the tortoise? . . . You pity the Indian, but to you as to him, one may say, 'Confess your ignorance first and let go the elephant and the tortoise.'" To the Marechale who put him the above question, he immediately retorted, "What is God?—A spirit.—If a spirit can make matter, why can matter not make spirit? Why should it? Because every day I see spirit being made by matter."

Rather annoyed, the Marechale said to him: "If all that you say is false, you will be damned. And it is terrible to be damned. To burn for an eternity is very long." The philosopher replied:

"Bah! La Fontaine thought that we should be in hell like a fish in water."

On this point, he agreed with Voltaire and La Fontaine. When a religious lady asked Voltaire to mend his ways in order to merit a place in heaven, he replied: "Heaven is the vast dormitory of the world," meaning that hell does not exist.

But can men be damned? Will He who made men fools punish them for having been fools? A young Mexican was brought before an old judge for the offence of having denied his existence, but the latter pardoned him without hesitation, because he read in his heart that he did it in good faith. Can God be less generous than this old man?

Besides, God cannot punish certain persons and reward others without injustice. Diderot says: "Suppose a father had three children. One lived in the fear of God, the second became a criminal and the third died very young. What will be their fate in the next life? According to the laws of the Church, the first will be rewarded in Heaven, the second punished in Hell, and the third will have neither punishment nor reward. But if this last said to God 'Sire, it depended only on you and I could have lived longer with my brother, and that would have been better for me,' what would God reply? If He says 'I saw what if I gave you a long life, you would fall into crime and on the day of my vengeance, would merit punishment by fire.' Then the second will say to God: 'Why did you give me a long life? If you had called me to eternity in my childhood, I would not be in Heaven like my elder brother, but I would sleep in peace by the side of the younger, and I would be better there than in Hell.' How would God get out of this difficulty? Perhaps He would say: 'I prolonged your life so that you may merit eternal felicity. And you reproach me for the favour I did you?' Then the third will say: 'If it was a favour, why did you not show it to me too?'"

The Real Christian does not exist.

Supposing God (who can only be unjust) has the right to reward and to punish, will he ever find true Christians? Does this species exist? If we believe Diderot, the "true Christian" is yet to be born. Diderot proved this to a lady who stayed next door, and who thought herself Christian. He says: "I opened a New Testament, and I read to my neighbour the Sermon on the Mount (Mathew Capt. V), and at each article, I asked her: 'Do you do this? And this? And this?'" Diderot goes further. As his neighbour is very beautiful, with a marvellous complexion, a very white skin, and a firm and opulent bust, and, in spite of her modesty, is not at all displeased at her beauty being noticed, he says to her: "Is it not written in the Bible (Mathew, V.28) that he who covets the wife of his neighbour has committed adultery in his heart?" Naturally, the neighbour answers in the affirmative, and Diderot continues: "And does not adultery committed in the heart lead to damnation as surely as actual adultery?" The neighbour approves again and Diderot goes on: "And if man is damned for adultery committed in his heart, what will be the fate of the woman who practically invites everybody who comes near her to commit this crime?" This was an attack against her stylish low-necked dress, so she pleaded custom, fashion, the necessity of avoiding ridicule and so on, "as if there was any comparison between a miserable little ridicule and eternal damnation for herself and her neighbour!" She also spoke of her desire to please her husband, "as if a husband could be senseless enough to insist on her forgetting decency and duty, and as if a true Christian should carry obedience to her husband to the limit of sacrificing the will of God and risking her Redemption." The Marechale, on hearing this, asked Diderot what his neighbour did after this. Diderot wrote: "The day after this conversation, being a ho-

day, when I went up to my flat, my neighbour was going out to attend Mass, dressed as usual. I smiled and she smiled, but said nothing. After this and a thousand other instances of the same kind, what influence can I accord to religion over manners? Almost none, and so much to the good, because if twenty thousand inhabitants of Paris suddenly took it into their heads to act strictly according to the Sermon on the Mount, there will be so many mad men that the Police Commissioner will not know what to do."

Two Kinds of Morality

After having observed that there are no true Christians, which is lucky for Humanity, Diderot concludes: "In religious books, there are two kinds of morality: one is general and common to all nations and all cults and which people try to follow; and another, which is special to each nation or each cult, which one is supposed to believe and which is preached in temples, but which is hardly followed. There have been different Popes competing for power at the same time, one at Rome, one at Avignon and even one at Pisa. When the others submitted to the one at Rome, we see these scandalous competitions at elections only. It seems these elections are more frequent than Nature would require, for there are many rumours of poisoning. They are perhaps not all true, but some certainly must be. In the History of the Church written by Abbe Beurlier and meant for educational institutions, he does not even hide from children that "In the 10th century, the Church had the misfortune to have at its head a certain number of Popes unworthy of the Pontifical throne... One of them, Alexander VI, brought shame to the Church. Some historians have tried to justify him, but their apologies had no success even with the most sincere Christians. It must be confessed that by his death, Christianity was delivered from a great scandal." But even among the Popes

which the Church respects, boasts of and canonises, we find assassins on a vast scale. Some of them were children. Leo X was tonsured at 7, became an Archbishop at 8, and Cardinal at 13. Theophylacte held the record, being elected Pope in 1033 at the age of 12. He became Benoit IX.

Man is born for Society. Convents must be suppressed.

Diderot is not a friend of convents, and monks and nuns find no favour with him. "To take a vow of poverty" he says in the 'Religieuse,' "is to undertake by oath to be an idler and a thief; the vow of Chastity is to promise to God the constant infraction of the wisest and most important of His laws; to make a vow of obedience is to give up the inalienable prerogative of man, viz. liberty. If one observes these vows, one is a criminal, if one does not, one is perjured. Convent life is for a fanatic or a hypocrite... Man is born for society. Isolate him, and his ideas will be dispersed, his character will become sour and he will be subject to all sorts of ridiculous affections and extravagant thoughts growing like brambles on wild land.

In his novel, "Religieuse", he describes convent life. Bans on recreations, unmerited and degrading penance, such as being obliged to eat on the ground in the middle of the dining-hall, partial or total suppression of daily nourishment, fasting on bread and water; breaking the window-panes during the severest winter cold, scenes of burial in which the victim, with a rope round her neck, is forced to lie in a coffin, enveloped in a winding-sheet and flooded with holy water, and helplessly watches her own burial; broken glass spread on her way on which she has to walk barefoot; red-hot pincers placed in her hand so as to burn her; thrusting needles into her back to prevent her taking the oath of 'renouncing Satan' as required of her, in

order to prove that she is possessed; binding her down brutally, so that the cord cuts into her flesh and draws blood from her wrists, refusing her under-linen, and soiling her room with all kinds of filth; paying repeated noisy visits to her at night to prevent her from sleeping, this is a list of the satanic inventions of the good sisters to make her suffer and

suggest to her the idea of suicide. When she is sent away to another convent, the odious conduct and significant caresses of the Lady Superior, her hysterical fit and final confession make the reader hate convents and wish that democracy will suppress convents and drive away beyond their frontiers all kinds of religious communities. (To be continued)

THE DYNAMICS OF INDIAN PHILOSOPHY

(Submitted to the Indian Philosophical Congress, Delhi, 1936)

BY

M. V. V. K. RANGACHARI

Belief in static perfection is not supported by experience, nor is it advocated by any of the important schools of Indian Philosophy. Evolution (Parinama) was recognised by the Samkhya system. The recognition of 'Apurva' as a super-sensuous principle sustaining causality in apparently disconnected events implied movement within the Purva Mimamsa school. The Nyaya-Vaisesikas believe in the disturbance of atomic-equilibrium wherefrom resulted the creation, and while it moved the universe lasted, while the restoration of the static equilibrium meant Pralaya (dissolution). In its dynamical aspect the Yoga system is hardly to be differentiated from the Samkhya thought, whatever the difference in the Sadhana advocated. For one thing, Yoga may be said to be more dynamic than the renunciatory scheme of Samkhya-samnyasa. The school of Vedanta started with Brahman, the Perfect Being; according to Sankara, the Perfect Being was truth, knowledge, and infinity (Satyam, Gnanam, Anantam Brahman). It was Truth, Knowledge and Bliss (Sat chit ananda). There is no second entity. The visible universe is illusion (vivarta). The Perfect Being is without qualities, beside Existence, of the nature of consciousness (Nirvisesha, chinmatra). But under Ramanuja, the icy cold perfection is qualified by the

reality of the universe, which is a fraction (amsa) of the Supreme Being. The logical sequence of such a starting point was the introduction of Parinama (evolution) into the Vedanta thought also, and support was found in the earlier Bodhayana Vritti which Ramanuja expressly followed. To invest reality to the moving creation is to acknowledge the dynamic aspect of life, and replace the contentment of perfection by a conscious individual and social endeavour (Purusha prayatna).

This dynamic motion is involved in the phrase 'cycles of civilisation.' It is a mystic theory that reconciles us to the cessation of a mode of social and collective life; it also means the advent of a new and apparently disconnected form of endeavour within the tribe, community, nation, or the entire race. The death of a civilisation may occur through violence from without, e. g., the deluge, earthquake, etc. The clash of war may put an end to the civilisation of the vanquished race. Otherwise, the question whether there are any natural limits to the endurance of any civilisation is very difficult to answer. The theory of natural death applied to nations and civilisations is not accepted on all hands. The Assyrian and Phoenician powers in spite of their excellences were short lived.

The pyramidal talents of Egyptian life 'merely await' a new directive force or wisdom to revive after several thousands of years. It is recognised that the Hindu civilisation which is five thousand years old, one of the oldest on earth, "is as full of vitality and promises as ever." Natural decline of nations and the peculiar types of civilisation represented by them is not apparent. The seed of death carried by individual biological forms is not necessarily carried by collective units in relation to their enduring capacity. Their dynamic movement may carry from progress to progress and possibly never retrograde within human memory. Collective Amritatva (immortality), of course in the relative sense, may not be an impossibility.

The longevity of civilisation does not however imply the absence of evolutionary change. Sanatana Dharma stands the test of time not in cold frigid fixity, but through a quickness of life that assimilates fresh nourishment as readily as it grew upon her past. To claim with Dean Inge, that the only promise of a better future is to be looked for from those to whom the past is dear, sounds like the easy snare of an unprogressive reaction. A civilisation may retain many healthy centres of life. It may withstand and outlive many an upheaval and vicissitude. Yet the formula of persistence is not found in unbending dogmatism.

Progress may be gradual or catastrophic, it may be woven on pre-existing fabric, or written on a clean slate. It requires more than human insight to prophesy whether attempts to demolish the past and build anew will prove dismal failures. Social science cannot and does not predict the times and details of events. The relativity of historical values is best implied in Kalidasa's dictum that antiquity by itself is not guarantee of goodness nor novelty in itself a ground for condemnation.

The rival claims of antiquity and

present environment raise the issue between time and space. The past history of a nation leaves its impress on collective character. The onslaught of strange affections tend to obliterate its peculiar historical mark. The attention of time-thinkers is rivetted to the glories of the past. The tendency to turn away from the grim present wherein environmental disturbance has a part leads to an abstraction far removed from the realities of life. Space-thinking is also guilty of a similar fallacy of abstracting away from the content of concrete existence. To be carried away by external forces unmindful of the historic past does not help to disclose the real meaning of national life. The universe reveals itself as a spectacle in space in any stated epoch, it flows onward as conscious experience in time, yet it marches to ever expanding revelations of fresh epochs. The historical perspective is a natural mode of thought, but divorced from the full-view of current conditions it stands equal danger of being reduced to an unreality and a farce.

The essential substance (reality, Satyatva) of eternality (nityatva, lastingness) is not stoppage, but movement and progress. The march on the railroad of life comes across many a level-crossing. The composite experience in any point is not released from spatial considerations any more than the train may ignore the clock. Social life is like all events in the space-time continuum, conditioned by and inter-related with other events spread out on the one canvas of outstretching time and expanding space.

To acknowledge relativity is not to belittle the homage due to the past. The process of time-thinking when it helps the historical elements having a survival value to assert themselves should on the other hand become helpful to social evolution. But the tendency to identify all modern movement with space-thinking is not an adequate presentation of the case for progress. But somehow, it

is becoming the fashion to raise a ghost using the name of Karl Marx in quarters where his thought is least considered. Aspects of social, economic and political philosophy have only to mention a name to bring wholesale condemnation over their head. This perversion is due to Avidya (ignorance) of the essential character, conditions and limitations of a system which is now named Dialectical Materialism, but which is the fruit of Hegel's method of approach to life and the universe.

To understand that the ideology of Marxism drew largely from the Hegelian Dialectics of Thesis, Antithesis and Synthesis and further to realise what close parallelism runs between Sankara's Vedanta and Hegel's philosophy may help as proof against a judgment *ex parte* in condemnation of a cause least attempted to be understood. Marxism claims to show that the general trend of political and social developments cannot run counter to economic forces. These in their turn do not run counter to the more unconscious development of science and technique. The idealism of Hegel leaves the world in the dreamland of abstraction. Marx and Engels evolved a plan of collective life in the practical surroundings of western society, with its class-wars and industrial exploitation.

From the Marxist point of view, thought and action form an inseparable unity. The stratification of a group of people who produced thought without action was the result of the emergence of class societies. The priests or theorist-philosophers mostly helped to cloak over the inequalities of wealth and power in society by mythological or metaphysical formulations. Attached to and living on the wealthy, these myth-makers and theorists acquired for their modes of abstract thought the prestige that attaches to wealth and power. Marxian analysis cut across their claims. The industrial worker of the Marxian period

furnished him with the model of the unity of thought and action. To correlate thought and action is not to slip history down; rather it is to enliven history, to infuse freshness and life into theoretical forms verging on extinction. To quicken the philosophical sense and make it flow in practical channels is furthering the cause of history and by no means causing the loss of the historical sense. Marx, at any rate, was no space-thinker.

The universe is an inter-related changing process. We apprehend it in parts, separating out, in thought, certain partial processes. Such aspects as society, means of production and similar words may be named as isolates. They are things that we drag from their environments in space, time and matter. They are mere fictions, for dialectically nothing is free of its environment. The experiment and observation of physical science is based upon this isolation of phases, rendering them neutral to the rest of the changing universe. Analysis and experiment would be impossible unless the thing analysed or experimented upon remained immune from external changes. Care is taken for instance that electricity is insulated, so that the tests sought to be applied may respond with precision. The isolates of science are measurably immune from the personality of the scientist. The personal factor does not enter into the experiment. The core of the scientific process is the investigation of cause and effect, of discovering the principles of determinism, of finding out complementary isolates forming a neutral combination. Cause and effect are thus dialectically interlocked.

The application of these very principles to human psychology, and to social life, by chopping off the object of investigation, disconnencting it notionally with the rest of its environment for purpose of study and better concentration is the method of social science gradually gaining in importance in our

time. But the scientist would be committing a mistake if he fail to restore the isolate in its original setting where alone its existence is real.

Any isolate, be it a physical object, a live animal, an individual mind, or even a whole nation, operates simultaneously in two different modes. It functions under the influence of its environment, and it is itself the dynamic that reacts on its environment. There is not a dog that is born, but has softened a human breast while eating crumbs that fall from the human hand.

Events are thus not merely the passive recipients of the environment, but are also the active agents affecting its shape. Even so, the time-thinking habit of the Indian mind may have reacted in the past, as certainly it does now, on the environment. The intellectual heights of Hegel, Spinoza, Emerson, Shelly, Carlyle and Wordsworth may have had something to do with Vedanta. The atmosphere of oriental metaphysics was not sealed so as not to flow into Alpine surroundings. Hegel may have imbibed the idealism of the Gangetic plains or breathed serene Himalayan airs. If to understand Marx, we read Hegel's philosophy, to reach Hegel, we should in logic look to Spinoza. The universal substance according to Spinoza was a kind of static but objective reality from which mind and matter both proceeded by some mystic differentiation. This static conception is akin to Sankara's Brahman, but for the negation of objectivity of matter implied in the Vivarta doctrine. Spinoza's Substance was a basic unity interpenetrating all features of the universe, even as God pervaded the universe and yet remained transcendent. ("Vish-tabhyaham idam kritsnam ekam-sena sthito jagat, Gita, X, 42). On the background of this idea of a universe inter-related through the medium of Substance, Hegel superimposed his con-

ception of continuous dialectical movement, a changing, developing, evolutionary universe. While Hegel stood for evolutionary change in an objective reality much as Ramanuja did in Visish-tadwaita Vedanta, his emphasis on Idealism placed him in the company of Sankara whose static Brahman is the predecessor of Spinoza's substance. Karl Marx inverted Hegel's dialectical procedure and discovered in the economic need of man in material surroundings the prime mover of all ideas. By the impact of ideas and the action they lead to on the economic structure is all social change effected. History is not merely the biography of great men, it is in essence social history. The necessities of social life are the basis on which communities develop, and in this economic setting, the laws of changing society must be studied.

Even as Ramanuja and Madhva were historically and logically the successors of the ideal monism of Sankara, Hegel's philosophy led in dialectical sequence to the practical socialist ideas of Marx. While Sankara and Hegel detached themselves from the determinism of practical life, Ramanuj and Madhva in the east, and Karl Marx and others in the west brought to bear their theories upon the problems of collective life. The differences in the results were shaped by history, by the variations which affected the dialectical movement. Ramanuja did less violence to the pre-existing forms of social thought, economic structure, and allegiance to textual authority, while evolving a scheme for mass emancipation, whereunder caste was assigned a secondary position, and social service (prapatti) was put in the forefront. Economic collectivisation was also started in temples and mutts that afforded food and culture on the group-basis (Goshthi). If the balance of social economic and philosophical tradition was maintained under him, it was because reform at pedestrian pace fulfilled the social need of his hour. But

the indication of active reform is patently marked, whatever the turn social changes took since then.

Karl Marx was faced with different material. The level of production, the state of technical development, and the fact that ownership and control of machinery were vested in a class determined his approach to the problem. Population was socially and economically stratified, and the class-structure resting on exploitation of the property-less does not remain static. History witnessed the emergence of internal forces giving rise to passage to new phases of society. It is undialectical to ignore history, as much as to suppose that history affirmed status quo, irrespective of present conditions. One who is not aware of the social conditioning of his thought feels that he can reach a final and universal truth. He thinks he can start with some principle which is absolute, certain, having a universal validity, and open for all time. He overlooks that relativity of knowledge prevents the discovery of such 'absolutes'. Under the same social conditions there may be room for considerable variety between one system and another, as under the Vedanta from

the textual triad (Prasthanā triya) the Achāryas drew up different systems. But between all these there is a common bond, arising from the social conditions in which they were formulated. A recognition of the social conditioning of philosophy at once reveals the absurdity of claiming absoluteness for any of its phases. Dialectical Materialism is conscious of this social reference. It is materialistic because it defines the central problem of modern society as a material problem and hence insists that any philosophy which is conscious of social reference must start at this point. It gains support in this regard from all systems that do not abrogate totally from the realistic basis of the universe and of man's place therein. The Vivarta of Sankara tended to a fatalistic unconcern with the realities of life. They are no cold unreal phantoms, but are a fraction (amsa) of the Purna (entirety). Service of humanity (prapatti) is the duty whereby the evolution of higher stages of existence is accomplished. While all the Achāryas seek to allay the Buddhistic catastrophe upon Vedic authority, the march of ideas between themselves inter se is no less dialectical.

(To be continued)

PRE-SCHOOL EDUCATION IN RUSSIA

(Continued from last issue)

Miss Kapila Khandwalla

The atmosphere inside the creche is made very joyous by coloured flowers balls of gorgeous colours suspended from various contrivances, pictures, toys, gold fish pond and such other means. There is exquisite cleanness kept all round the place.

Most of the creches are overwhelming in their beauty. They are making a great drive for beauty in the life of the children.

I shall describe one of the creche run

there because the rest are more or less run on similar lines. The building is well planned. The rooms are large and lofty and beautifully ventilated allowing maximum light to come in. There are separate entrances for different age groups, separate receiving room, bath room, chute down which to send soiled linen, and kitchen to prepare light food. Each room has a special verandah where the children sleep in summer and winter. The whole creche has a large kitchen attached to it for main meals and a laundry. There is

a garden and play ground along with it. It is in charge of fully trained persons, preferably persons with medical educational training. Each group consists of 12 to 15 children and has a qualified person in charge with an untrained assistant. It is also a very powerful centre for parents' training, for, every creche has a child study room where much work is done with the parents.

There is a regular routine to be followed in the creche. Mothers bring their children to the creche before they go to work. They are received by the nurse or teacher, taken to the medical room, examined and are sent for their bath. Each child has a locker where its own clothes are neatly kept after bath. The child wears a new set of clothes every day after bath, which are provided by the creche. Breakfast follows. Different age groups are separated, the tiniest ones on their cots, those who can sit up to the play pen and the toddlers to their rooms which are well-equipped with educational and play material. They spend couple of hours out of doors in the morning. One very often sees the little (2 or 3 years ones going along streets in the open. They are accompanied by a few adults. This is intended for enlarging the children's experience and their outlook. After this they have washing which is followed by dinner. Then a couple of hours sleep, a drink of milk, some indoor play, tea if mother is still away and the day's work at the creche is done. Those whose mothers are working at night remain in the creche rest room all night. Material used for indoor play in those creches is similar to that of kindergarten and Montessori materials and the aim too is that of sense training. They have plenty of coloured paper crayons and such other colourful material. The rooms are well decorated and are full of light and space.

Great attention is paid to health and prevention of disease. The workers in charge have to wear a white over all while in the creche. All visitors have to

wear them too before entering a creche. Mothers who come to feed their babies have to wear them and get their breasts sterilised before they feed them. Separate entrance for all groups and examination by doctors minimise the danger of infection. This standard of cleanliness is kept up in most of the creches. There are some which do not come up to the standard but it is only a matter of time before all the creches reach the highest standard.

There is another quite a distinct type of pre-school institution in U.S.S.R. That is the creche room at every mail line railway station. They supply a very urgent need. They are comparatively new, so all are not invariably good. Big railway stations and junctions are crowded by masses of peasants and others waiting for one or two days for a place in trains. The environment round about the station is far from being congenial for the little ones. In some of the best rest rooms they have cots all round and near the wall with a big play-pen in the centre with any number of toys. (Byyork St. Moscow). The room is large and airy and have a bath room with several baths in it. Children are given bath and suitable food. Trained workers are able to carry on a good deal of educational work with parents who are very appreciative.

Where it has not been possible to have creches, they have begun with playgrounds to suit different seasons. Old courtyards which were left uncared for have been turned into playgrounds. They make grass-plot, flower beds, little hills, small bridges to cross small lakes to splash and paddle for the children. There is a shelter from sun, rain and snow and for meals in winter. Such institutions are a tribute to the enthusiasm and love for children of Soviet women. Dr. Konyes is one of the pioneers of this movement.

The nursery infant school continues the work begun in the creche. Here too, you do come across poorly run schools

but they too are coming up to the best standard.

Each school has 75 to 80 children. They are divided into 3 groups.

- 1)—4 to 5 years.
- 2)—5 to 6 years.
- 3)—6 to 7 years.

The staff is made of 20 members including domestics (Director, 6 teachers, 1 artist, 1 child psychologist, 4 maids, 1 cook, 1 laundry maid, 1 handyman, 3 workers for night).

Each group has two teachers and they have 10 hours work between themselves. This nursery infant school is doing research work for the Commissariat of Education and so is receiving a grant from the department; otherwise they are maintained by factories, clubs or institutions whose workers they serve. Those parents who can, pay 10 to 25 roubles a month. Their summer months are spent in the country.

Generally the school regime is as follows:—

7-30 a.m. to 5-30 p.m. daily.

Some children whose mothers are working late or at night spend the night in the same school. They sleep in the rest room.

7-30 to 8-30 a.m.: Changing into school clothes, washing, toilet, free play, physical exercise.

8-30 a.m.: Breakfast—porridge, tea or milk, bread, butter and jam.

9-30 a.m.: Lessons: drawing, carpentry, nature study, reading, writing, and numbers.

(4 or 5 year ones have 25 to 30 minutes formal work each lesson lasting for more than 15 minutes).

5-6 years 40-45 minutes formal work, each lesson 20 minutes. 6-7 years. 1 hour formal work, each lesson 30 minutes.

Outdoor Play.

12-30 p.m.: Dining—Scrap, fish or meat, vegetables. Vegetables except potatoes difficult in winter.

Dead Hour.

2 to 4 p.m.: Sleep, change and camp beds or cots, Some sleep for 1½ hours.

4 p.m.: Milk, Biscuits, or bun.

5-30 p.m.: Play.

6-30 p.m.: Supper, (if staying at night), milk, cocoa, bread, butter, salad, savoury).

8 p.m.: Bed. (20 children in each spending the night).

The school has large airy rest rooms for sleeping purposes. The vast charming room is the children's reading room and library. They encourage a love of books, a knowledge of their care at an early age.

Then there is another large hall for gymnastic apparatus. In the centre there are traffic lights to teach children road sense. There are large blocks for children to build houses and factories. Large houses for them to sit inside. This provides a great amount of pleasure and satisfaction to them. The size demands co-operation of at least two children. Thus providing training for collective work.

There are attractive pictures all round which could be changed. There is altogether an atmosphere of freedom and friendliness and at the same time of discipline and order. There they have scope for initiative. Their foundations of self-government, self-reliance are laid in them. Their emotional needs are satisfied by singing, dancing, painting, etc. The adult workers give much affection to them.

There are questionnaires to find out how the children understand the social science, i.e. they answer questions like "who is Lenin", "who is Stalin", "what is

collective farm, their factory, pioneers, Red Army, etc." This material is first discussed with the staff and social psychologist and from these discussions future talks are moulded.

Rooms are large and airy. There are small low cupboards for equipment material so that children can take it out, place it back and be responsible for its tidiness. There is a nature corner in every room mainly consisting of plants and aquarium. In another corner is a stand with books written by teachers and illustrated by children. They begin to write and count numbers until they are six years old. The 6 to 7 year old groups has a cupboard for domestic tools like brushes, dusters, cooking, utensils egg whisks etc. There is a workshop for the eldest group where they use hammers saw, etc., having polytechnical education. They make simple things themselves or as suggested by teachers.

There are staff meetings, to discuss general problems and teachers special meetings once a month to discuss specific problems. They also have celebrations.

Camps etc., for children and their parents. Every teacher draws up her detailed plan of work and daily time table. She gives 3 reports a year of every child and keeps daily record of the progress of every child.

There is a room which is generally used as a museum and as the centre of parents education. Most of the work done consists of charts, diagrams, slogans, questions on the walls of the room. A parents council meets every month to discuss general problems. Parents are encouraged to visit the pedagogue, and teachers visit the home to obtain first hand information about the child and meet the difficulties if any.

The facts presented above show that the Soviet Government has achieved in the pre-school educational sphere within 10 years what other countries would not have achieved in a century. This shows the interest of the Government in giving the broadest possible measure of education to the people. Russian is teaching the world many lessons and this is one of them.

DOES WESTERN EDUCATION TEACH IMMORALITY?

BY
A STUDENT

It is feared by some that with the spread of western education in this country, the sense of morality of its people is fast disappearing, and that unless some effective measure is soon adopted to check it, the whole of our country would become immoral. The gradual abolition of purdah custom, the popularity among advanced Indian ladies of low-necked sleeveless blouses and semi-western garments, the prevalence of uncovered heads and bobbed hair, the ever-increasing interest in the art and entertainment of cinematography, the spread of the knowledge of birth-control and sexology, and the demand of co-education by young men and women,

are regarded as the antecedents to immorality. If the wife of one man is seen in the company of another man on some social occasion, it is looked upon with the greatest alarm. The heads of old Indian fogies move gravely and sorrowfully; "Kaliyug (the Age of Evils) has come," they whisper. It is firmly believed by these people that even if western education does not actually teach atheism, it almost invariably removes the fear of the Supernatural from the hearts of men and women who receive it, and finally leads them to immorality. Western education is pictured by them as an octopus, its arms labelled Sex Education, Co-education, Love

Marriage, Birth-Control, Kinematography etc. each winding round the waist of poor Mother India and dragging her to her doom in the abyss of immorality. All these combined they call Modernism—the horror of every puritan's mind.

Perhaps no belief is more widespread in India and more vehemently clung to than that they are the most moral people in the world and that the westerners are the most immoral. The morality of India is centred in the custom of keeping young men and women apart either by keeping the latter in seclusion or teaching them other "modest ways". Young men are exhorted by the elderly people never to raise their eyes to any passing female form, and the girls are taught to keep the boys at bay by suppressing their smiles, concealing their natural charms in ugly ill-fitting clothes and to focus their eyes to infinity when a young man happens to pass them. They are brought up in such a way as never to develop sufficient courage to question the right of their parents to choose for them their future husbands, or to express their own choice if they by chance have made one. Therein, according to them, are supposed to lie the qualities of modesty, culture and refinement. Any deliberate or casual breach of these "laws" puts the participant or participants in the category of West-struck immoral people and brings upon them the wrath of their elders. The first thing that is cursed and denounced is western education. Courtship is considered to be a form of mental corruption and love-marriage an unpardonable sin against parents. They say with great emphasis that the result of free mixing between the sexes in the West has been that "not a single girl above sixteen is left a virgin." When boys run after girls, cast greedy glances and make remarks on them, which must be the inevitable and natural result of keeping them apart, western education is again held responsible for the mischief. In a word, to the old fogies, who by no means

comprise a small proportion of the people of this country, immorality lies in the establishment of sexual relationships outside wedlock while they regard those very relationships completely moral within it.

It is beyond my power of imagination and understanding to think of the very same acts immoral before the few processes of a superstitious ceremony and absolutely moral after that, especially when both of the participants are willing. On the other hand, I cannot think of anything more base and immoral than forced sexual intercourse with a girl. That is a crime. However immoral the westerners may be according to the old fogey sort of Indian, this one crime is almost entirely absent among them. In the West men "woo and win" the girl while here in India in spite of its being "the most moral country in the world," thousands of cases of abduction and rape occur every year. And since in no civilised country, the two married individuals are so much strangers to each other on their first wedding night as they are in India, it must be accepted once for all that Indians, and not westerners, are the most immoral people in the world. Thus it also becomes evident that no way of marriage in the whole world is more condemnable than that practised in India. Our parents should have no right to marry us. That is the most brutal and tyrannical way imaginable.

The policy of keeping young men and women apart has not only robbed India of the most honourable virtue that might have been hers, but has also done her very considerable material harm. The prevalence of such emotional complexes as hysteria, sex guilt (the so-called modesty), auto-eroticism, and homosexuality, in this country are the direct consequences of this policy. Then, the word of parents which reigns supreme in the matters of marriage is constantly poisoning the lives of countless married couples who would otherwise have been happy. They say because the number

of divorces in India is much lower than in any western country it goes to show that the marital life in India is much happier than in the West. This is absolutely fallacious. Here the number of divorces is low because the spirit to fight for their rights is seldom allowed to develop in the girls, and, instead, they are taught to be meek, submissive, and almost as slaves to the men to whom they are married. Therein lies the doctrine of "pati-bhakti". Now the question arises what sort of off-spring these puny spiritless creatures would produce. It need not be emphasised that the issues of such couples would be weaker mentally as well as physically than their parents. And this is what is actually happening in India. We are paying the price of the chastity of our womankind in the form of an ever-weakening race. But what is chastity? "A purely technical virtue," so said H. G. Wells once. It is surprising indeed that a woman should carry for ever in life the stigma of unchastity if ever she has had sexual intercourse, *forced or wilful*, with a man, while the same act is regarded legitimate *be she willing or not* after a mere nonsensical ceremony.

It needs to be mentioned clearly that whatever I have said so far by no means implies that I am supporting polygamy and polyandry or denouncing monogamy. The words polygamy and polyandry must not be confused with the organised institutions of those names, but should be taken to denote simply that urge in married men and women which causes them to indulge in sexual relationships with other persons than those who are their avowed life-partners. Some psychologists ascribe the desire to indulge in extra-marital relations to the infantile mother fixation known as Mother Image (Lawrence Gould), and, perhaps, father image. Others oppose this view by asserting that polygamy and

polyandry are human nature, and claim that the confusion arises because of the censorship (conscience), created by mothers in their children usually as a traditional virtue, when it stands against the natural urge. Whatever the truth, we should determine our conduct according to its influence on our national welfare and such as to prevent the race from degeneration and ultimate destruction. If betterment of the Indian people lies in monogamy they must follow it; if it is deteriorating they should think out a better course. It must be remembered that the domestic happiness of individuals has a profound influence on the progress of a nation—it is the compass which indicates whether it is going to be shipwrecked or to be a land of plenty. My answer to those who object to the free mixing of married men and women on religious grounds is that the real test of virtue lies not in evading sin by avoiding temptation, but in facing temptation and resisting it.

Lastly in the defence of western education I want to say that not only has it not done any harm to this country which is worth taking into account, but it has made very valuable contributions toward learning and the welfare of its people. Whatever golden ages India might have seen in the remote past, to-day we owe all our sciences and many arts (music being an important exception) to the West and western education. It has also developed our sense of aesthetics especially through the medium of cinema. The greatest contribution that it has made towards the welfare of the people of this country is the science of medicine and the knowledge of birth control. Therefore those who stand up to oppose western education and call it demoralising must qualify themselves to do so by first unlearning whatever they have learned from it and renouncing the benefits of its greatest science—the science of medicine.

HOW TO SUSTAIN REASON

BY

ASTRON

Recent events bring to our mind with tremendous force the urgent necessity for all lovers of freedom and intellectual liberty to rise in united action against the advancing forces of irrationalism and bigotry in contemporary society. War, Fascism, and Imperialism threaten civilisation and human freedom with annihilation. Yet, these scourges, common to all humanity are not all that prey upon India. Fanaticism and bigotry are cramping the progress of the country. Religiosity of all types and mysticism have long been controlling the political and social life of the people. To-day it is not different. "Inner voices" and "outer voices" are the distinguishing beliefs of the most influential leaders of political thought in the country. Politics and social ethics have become the laboratory and playground of fantastic religious ideas. The profound discontentment of the masses with the rotten conditions of their existence is sought to be diverted into the barren tracks of irrational and futile religious reformism. The conflict between the exploiters and the exploited is thus sought to be minimised by injecting a reformed otherworldliness into society. Blind worship of personalities labels and religious creeds is fostered even in the most important political organisations of the country. The situation is thus pregnant with profound dangers to society. Indifference or delay on our part would spell irreparable disaster.

The Rationalist Association of India is one of the most important bodies in the country standing for intellectual liberty and rational freedom. This association which has now entered the seventh year of its career has still to struggle for existence. It is only due to the perseverance and generosity of a few of its members that the flag of Ra-

tionalism has been kept flying so long in this country. Why is it that this body which is fighting for the rights of man, which is seeking to spread light where there is darkness, knowledge where there is ignorance, is forced to lead a precarious existence? The answer is "Lack of funds". It is high time that all the members and those who realise the necessity for a well-organised rationalist body in this country make a determined effort to place the association on a strong financial basis.

One must agree with Dr. Stanton Coit when he says that "The acid test of any one's loyalty to Reason shall be that he empties his purse at the foot of its throne. Reason, although the highest, if not backed by economic force, is the feeblest of all things". He goes to say that "There are thousands of men of first class ability and character ready to devote themselves soul and body to Rationalist research and propaganda. But the means have not been forthcoming to provide them with a living wage, and, it would seem, even a champion of rationalist principles cannot teach if he be not kept alive. . . Endow free thought adequately and in a generation it will hound the menace of distatorship out of every country in Europe."

"Reason", the journal of our association is only a feeble light amidst the encircling gloom but it carries its message of freedom to many parts of India and the world. It has been so far published though not very regularly due to the generosity of a few members. Donations are collected and are used up for its publication and again the association becomes in need of funds.

Why not start a sustention fund for "Reason"? The money when collected

should not be used but invested so as to yield a small income which will go to meet the loss incurred in its publication. However small the income may be, it will be a regular help, and members' subscriptions can then be used for other activities and need not be spent for the publication of "Reason" as at present. Even the Literary Guide which has a sound backing and the Freethinker which has entered its fifty-seventh year of publication are in need of a sustention fund, and that too in England. Small wonder that "Reason" has to struggle for existence.

A sum of Rs. 30,000 is all that is needed and if the members determine there should be no great difficulty to realise this amount. A few people alone can contribute the whole of it. Those who contribute towards this will indeed be doing a great service. It will be due to them alone that reason shall at last prevail in this country. In gratitude to the great freethinkers of the past who have spent their lives in fighting for the liberties we enjoy to-day, every freethinker must do his duty.

appeal to man's reason alone. We must form a society of our own to defy the social ostracism which dogs the footsteps of every fighting free thinker. Every rationalist must co-operate with and help his fellow rationalists in every sphere of life. Then alone can they gain their objectives. The Rationalist association of India must succour all those who are victimised by the irrational forces in Society.

Educational institutions established and controlled by rationalists are another great necessity. Dr. D'Avoine has rightly stressed this point in his article in the last issue. A rational and scientific outlook on life must be inculcated from the very childhood. It is not very easy to graft rationalism on to what is already a bundle of superstitions and fears.

If these suggestions are acceptable to members and other readers, let us start to carry them out. Delay means inevitable deluge of society in barbarism and irrationalism.

We cannot succeed by theoretical "One who is born must die why not die for some great and good cause?"

THE CYNIC

I laughed at the world until my voice
Itself was baulked by its own loud noise;
But ere the echo died on the ear
I could not, for my laugh, restrain a tear.

I laughed at myself until Mirth outcried:
"I cannot, oh Cynic, your laughter abide"
"But . . ." as my voice in wonder began,
Sorrow broke in: "I can, I can!"

A. E. SHOHET.

REASON

The Journal of The Rationalist
Association of India.

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Bombay.

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*All contributions should be addressed to the
Editor "REASON" Jagjivan Mansions, 13, New
Bhatwadi, Bombay 4, and should reach the editor on
or before the 15th of each month.*

*The writers of the articles in this journal are
themselves responsible for the views expressed and do
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*For Advertisement rates etc. Please apply to the
Business Manager "REASON" care of the Rationa-
list Association of India. Concession rates to members.*

AT THE SECRETARY'S TABLE

We have received very encouraging messages from such veteran champions of Rationalism as Chapman Cohen, the editor of the Freethinker, Dr. Har Dayal and Frederick Gould. They have suggested that our association should appeal for funds in India and abroad and they have promised

to work in this behalf in England. That we are urgently in need of funds is too well known a fact. It is equally true that Indians must contribute more than our friends abroad, for, after all, the work is to be done in India and every contribution would be an index of the enthusiasm for Rationalism that we have in this country.

The next issue of Reason is expected to contain special contributions from Chapman Cohen on the coronation and connected issues.

We request members to study particular problems especially those connected with the social life around them, and send us their valuable contributions.

From June we expect to organise a series of lectures on various social, cultural, philosophic and scientific problems by rationalists who are experts in their respective studies. Their lectures will be published serially in the 'Reason'.

Those of our members who may be going to different places during the summer vacation are requested to carry the message of Rationalism wherever they go, organise meetings at such places, enrol members and send us the names of all sympathisers and well-wishers of our association.

Miss Kapila Khandwala, our enthusiastic joint secretary will shortly be proceeding to Japan, China and other places in the East to study the systems of education prevailing in those countries. We are sure her observations will enable her to make valuable contributions to the progress of Rational education in India.

Mr. Roshan Muhammad, an enthusiastic member of our association, now prosecuting his studies in England is carrying on vigorous propaganda on our behalf there. In order to facilitate the work of the association there he has been appointed officer representative of our As-

sociation for England and the Continent and is authorised to collect funds on its behalf.

We extend a warm welcome to Dr. Har Dayal who has become our member. He writes "I hope you will promote a constructive and lofty ideal of Rationalism."

Dr. Har Dayal needs no introduction. All Rationalists should read his splendid book "Hints for Self Culture" (Watts). A book whose expressive language makes the reader vividly feel that the author is speaking to him personally. He has contributed much towards the cause of intellectual freedom and internationalism.

We are thankful for the following new memberships and renewals of subscriptions.

Aziz F. Nakhoda, Surat, Rs. 5; F. M. T., Bombay, Rs. 5; R. K. Javeri, Calcutta Rs. 5; Ramdas Khimji, Khar, Bombay, Rs. 5; Charu Chander Das, Calcutta Rs. 5.

ABRAHAM SOLOMON,
Jt. Hony. Secretary, R.A.I.

- If you recognise Human Equality.
- If you desire Intellectual Liberty and Rational Freedom.
- If you hate Superstition, Priestcraft, Fanaticism, Bigotry and Hypocrisy.

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THE RATIONALIST ASSOCIATION
of
INDIA

which seeks :

"To combat all religious and social beliefs and customs that cannot stand the test of Reason and to endeavour to create a scientific and tolerant mentality among the people of this country."

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But for tradition, we walk ever more to
higher paths by brightening Reason's lamp.
—George Elliot.

REASON

THE JOURNAL OF THE RATIONALIST ASSOCIATION OF INDIA

"TO COMBAT ALL RELIGIOUS AND SOCIAL BELIEFS AND CUSTOMS THAT CANNOT STAND THE TEST OF REASON AND TO ENDEAVOUR TO CREATE A SCIENTIFIC AND TOLERANT MENTALITY AMONG THE PEOPLE OF THIS COUNTRY." *"Objects of the Rationalist Association of India."*

New Series.

MAY 1937

No. 4.

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RATIONALISTS & WAR

BY

K. T. CHANDY

Two decades ago humanity was in the midst of an appalling carnage. Imperial profits and colonial booty were then the ruling dieties; death and desolation, their faithful agents; the toiling masses of the world their sacrificial offerings. Peasants bending stoically over their massive ploughs in sweltering heat, shepherds ruminating over their humble lot before smouldering embers in the still hours of nights, village blacksmiths mending plough and scythe in their smoke filled huts, factory hands toiling arduously within gloomy walls for a meager existence; the entire middle class striving ceaselessly to climb one little step up the social ladder, the youth of every land burning with idealism; all were lured into the battlefields of Imperialism only to be

butchered like wild animals. "King and country", "Patriotism," the "prestige of the nation and the race," the "White man's burden", "Democracy" and a host of other hypocritical slogans and symbols were systematically used by imperialists and militarists to delude the masses and to draw them into the war. The entire machinery for propaganda was harnessed for distorting issues, suppressing the supremacy of Reason, painting war in golden colours and exciting the wildest passions of men. The poppy fields of Flanders, the burning sands of Arabia, the vineyards of France, the highlands of Central Europe and all the seas and creeks of the world witnessed with disgust the ghastly horrors perpetrated during that devil's carnival. The flower of the rising gene-

ration was mown down like grass. Famine, disease and mental frustration,—the inevitable concomitants of war—wrecked the homes of the toilers of the world and left them monuments of desolation and imperialist rapacity.

Forces of destruction are once again battering down the ramparts of civilisation. The entire edifice of the League of Nations, with its system of treaties, covenants and pacts has collapsed like a house built on sands. Disarmament Conference has opened the flood gates to re-armament. The nations of the world are in the grips of a terrible desire to excel each other in the possession of the agents of death. All human ingenuity, all the achievements of science are yoked to this horrible purpose. The destructive capacity of armaments is proceeding from perfection unto perfection threatening to annihilate military and civilian sections of the population alike. Whole populations, including women and children are pressed into military service. Fascism, the most brutal dictatorship of the exploiting classes ever known in history, has emerged into human affairs as the high priest of war and the organiser of social decay. The imperialists of the world are once again on the war path, trampling under their feet all ideas of international morality. There is once more a feverish search for ideas and formulas calculated to hide the real issues and whip up mass frenzy. "Spreading civilisation in dark abyssinia", the "superiority of the Nordic races and the divine mission of the Germanic nation", the "religious duty to rescue Spain from socialism" are the slogans raised by Mussolini, Hitler, and Franco to justify their crime on society. Chamberlain and Eden talk of "Armed peace" to cover up their double edged policy of passive acquiescence to fascist depredations and colossal rearmament to retain colonies against internal revolts and external aggression. 'Honour', 'prestige', 'king', 'country' and ironically enough, even 'peace' are advertised as the justification for war.

The coming war, if it is not prevent-

ed, and is allowed to drag on to its full length, shall end in a victory of the exhausted over the dead. No nation shall be exempt from its effects. Murder, famine and disease shall desolate whole regions of the earth. Means of production shall be destroyed almost completely leaving the world a prey to utter misery. The civilisation that mankind has tardily built up through centuries of patient and prolonged exercise of Reason and the culture that has been shaped and enriched through years of human suffering and striving shall well nigh be annihilated if the common men of the world do not rise and stop war.

Emil Ludwig, the greatest biographer of modern times, considers that the cause of war is ultimately emotional. What are these emotions that drive men to war? He answers: "Patriotism and Nationalism". The love of one's country, of its familiar natural scenes, of its people amongst whom one has lived and moved from childhood, of its literature and art, of its freedom, is not in itself a dangerous emotion. The feeling of cultural unity, of common traditions, of common problems, expressing itself in a love of the collective group and a devotion to its welfare is not in itself a source of war. In a society stratified into classes, the ruling class which controls the entire machinery of propaganda and education is constantly engaged in making people believe that national interests are identical with the differential interests of that class, that patriotism and nationalism demand the achievement and defence of those special class interests, if need be by aggression and war. Thus the economic necessity of the ruling group in contemporary society to secure colonies and markets and the consequent imperialist rivalries among nations induce this group to distort the economic issues and exploit the patriotic and national sentiments of the people for its own imperial ends. If therefore, today, these emotions have become chauvinistic in their expressions, under the controlled and calculated propaganda of Imperialism and Fascism, the cause of war

must be traced beyond them to the economic organisation of society in which they have become pernicious. It is not that wars are fought because the national and patriotic emotions are intrinsically aggressive in their nature, but it is that these emotions have become so because imperialist wars are bred by the existing economic system. We hear of nation's honour and nation's prestige, but they and similar slogans cleverly hide behind them the economic forces inherent in contemporary society.

"Human nature makes war inevitable", says the militarist. One feels amused at such a description of things. As Milne says in his book "Peace with honour," "only a mind dulled by the rust of centuries can allow itself to think that war is human nature." "Universal peace may have seemed an impossible dream to our forefathers, but in their days war was not the impossible night mare which it is now become. Nor was theirs universal war." To say that human nature delights in doing something which annihilates all that it holds sacred including life itself on a universal scale is to say that the world has become a lunatic asylum. To-day when the voice of the toiling masses has risen in support of peace, it is a crime to accuse human nature of such depravity as would lead to universal murder. If the peoples of the world are not able to stop the threatened war, if the imperialists succeed in throwing the world into another holocaust, that will be the signal for the masses to rise in revolt and demolish the antiquated economic organisation which make wars inevitable.

While one section condemns war and attributes it to the sinful nature of man, the fascists of the world extoll war and consider it as the best and the highest expression of human nature. Mussolini declares that "war alone brings all human energies to their highest tension, and stamps the mark of nobility on those peoples who have the courage to face it." With equal logic one might say that earthquakes and great plagues are necessary

because they bring out all the greatest qualities of men. "Yet, looking at the matter in the cold light of reason, we see that a man is not a hero who is conscripted; or who is in the army for lack of other employment; or who is carried away by the waving of flags and the thrumming of bands; or who joins up as so many did, because life in war time is hell any way, and only in uniform can one escape from thinking about it. Nor, we observe, do these ordinary unheroic men become heroes just because an incompetent commander has hurled them in mass upon uncut wire, there to hang like black berries, until they are ripe for the honour, if chance picks upon them, of Unknown Warrior." (Milne). To abolish international murder and rapine is not to deprive men of any scope for creative expression. To grapple with the facts of science, to conquer space and time, to climb the Himalayas and explore the stratosphere and the poles, to engage in freeing life from diseases, to harness the forces of nature for the welfare of man, to perfect the organisation of society and to produce a literature and art that would thrill men and evoke the best in them, demand the exercise of the best and the highest in human nature. War is a crime, war is irrational. But fascist barbarism considers the ethics of the jungle the highest water-mark of civilisation.

"Absolute sovereignty," says the student of international law, "is the cause of war." The national states of to-day refuse to allow all their disputes inter se to be settled by arbitration. They consider themselves as the ultimate arbiters of the justice or the injustice of their standpoint in any dispute. There is no international super state that can decide such disputes and enforce its point of view upon recalcitrant nations. Certainly this is a cause of war. But our student of law must not forget that no nation will surrender its sovereignty to an international organisation as long as the class which control its destinies must either fight for safe markets and colonies or surrender its social

supremacy before a new social order. We must trace back to the ultimate cause of war before we can succeed in our attempt to create a peaceful international society.

"War is not a natural catastrophe like the earthquake". It is the necessary expression of the economic organisation of the contemporary society. A society which permits appalling poverty amidst incredible plenty, which consigns millions to unemployment and misery, whose economic order breeds a mad search for colonies and safe markets, whose sole purpose is private profit and not social welfare, will always try to resolve its contradictions through war. A new society based on rational division of wealth among men, and abolition of class and racial exploitation, alone can vouchsafe international peace.

The failure of the disarmament conference has shown the political bankruptcy of those who attempt to humanise war and to reduce it into an artificial game. So long as the economic urge to imperialist rivalries exist and so long as the ordinary men of the world submit to the ruling groups without questioning their bona fides, no pact, no treaty seeking to ban certain types of armaments will be adhered to in times of war. If the purpose of war is to kill as many of your opponents as you can so as to make them submit to your desires, then it does not matter with what you kill so long as you kill. You can quicker make tiger a vegetarian than humanise any actual war.

Nations are talking of "Armed peace". The Archbishop of Canterbury recently stated that a well armed Britain is the best guarantor of peace. In a world of armament race, no one particular nation can hope of have that much military superiority over the combined strengths of other nations as to become the guarantor of peace. Each nation tries to justify its armament programmes on the ground that it wants to become such a guarantor. This is the royal road to inevitable war and not to peace. Yet,

this slogan is only a camouflage to hide a calculated policy of imperial expansion or defence of imperial possessions against internal revolts and external aggressions. For any imperialist nation to maintain a large navy and a large air force; to assert that she is keeping them "solely for defensive purposes" or for "maintaining international peace"; and to expect any other country to believe her is to exhibit "an ingenuousness unworthy even of the nursery."

The League of Nations is a spectacle of sad failure. Its impotence in the Italo-Abyssinian, Sino-Japanese and Spanish questions has revealed to the peoples of the world its fundamental defects. All the liberal illusions, on which it was built up, of creating a peaceful international society on a decadent basis of economic and racial exploitation of individuals and nations by others, have to-day vanished like a midsummer's night's dream. It did not envisage or strive for the requisite transformation in the economic and political organisation of society but it became the battle ground of politicians and diplomats who talked of peace and prepared for war. Its only political utility to-day is that it offers those nations threatened with fascist aggression a very feeble means to expose the pro-war policy of other nations.

The peace of the world is one and indivisible. The security of no one nation can be vouchsafed unless there is collective security. No two nations can be allowed to engage in a war without that war soon throwing the whole world into the fiery cauldron. The Italo-Abyssinian war has only brought the whole world on to the brink of another war. The attempt to localise that war by the nations of the world refusing to apply the right Sanctions against Italy at the right time, has only sharpened the conflict between Italy and England. To passively acquiesce to fascist aggressions in Abyssinia, Spain and Japan is not to avoid war but it is to trample under feet international morality, to reduce the possibility of collective ac-

tion in the right direction and to make a deadly war in the future inevitable. Unless the nations of the world agree that they shall faithfully observe a pact of non-aggression and mutual aid in case of aggression, there can be no peace. But the major powers of the world among whom is Britain, refuse to enter such a pact, thus revealing the fact that imperial profit and not peace is the objective of their foreign policy. Unless the peoples of the democratic countries of the world force out of power those Governments opposed to such a pact, the Fascists of the world will drag humanity into another universal war in the near future.

The Rationalists of India should not go down in history as persons who did not do their best to awaken the people to the grim catastrophe awaiting round the corner. Let us not like penguins, who become paralytic in face of danger, lose our courage in this time of crisis. The test of our rationalism shall be the measure of our faith in the possibility and desirability of peace and the strength of our action in the organisation of people against war. We must unite with all elements at home and abroad genuinely opposed to war and awaken the ordinary men of the world to the realities of the situation. Indifference would be suicidal.

NOTES & HAPPENINGS

BY

Dr. C. L. D'AVOINE

It has often been remarked in these columns that were it not for the enterprise and efforts of Protestant and Roman Catholic Missionaries, the Anglo-Indian and Domiciled European and Indian Christian Communities would have received little or no education in this country. The truth of this was reflected at a meeting recently convened by the Archbishop of Canterbury to consider an appeal for funds to help the Church of England schools in India. The Archbishop said that the letter of the Bishops of India to him states:—

"Our Church maintains for the Anglo-Indian and Domiciled European community about 75 schools in India and Burma in which 14,000 children are receiving their education. These schools, while valuable to others, are absolutely essential to the Domiciled and Anglo-Indian community and together with the Roman Catholic institutions of the same type, afford the only means of giving this community the education it needs. Government maintains Indians and even in Anglo-Indian schools the Government insists on the admission of 15 to 25 per cent of non-Christians."

The Missionaries welcome this, for the admission of non-Christians not only secures for them the grant the Government gives, but the education of the non-Christians by them is supposed to exercise an influence on Indian opinions and for breaking racial barriers. Whatever truth there is in this, there is no doubt that these missionaries exercise a mighty influence on the education of Christian youth in India. This, as we have often pointed out, explains why it is so difficult to spread Rationalism among such people, who have received a one-sided education, generally of a biased nature, against Rationalism. Even among people who have received higher education in these missionary institutions, especially in Roman Catholic ones, one cannot fail to notice that the missionary teaching has generally succeeded in making them narrow-minded, bigoted and sectarian in their outlook on life. It is also doubtful whether these missionaries have really succeeded in breaking racial barriers in India among the people educated by them. Racial arrogance and communal bias seem precisely to be stronger among people who have been educated in mission schools and colleges.

The celebrations of the last Mohorum and Holi Festivals were marked by a good deal of disturbances and rioting almost all over India. It is clear that nothing accentuates the antagonism between Mahomedans and Hindus more than the religious festivals which in India are of frequent occurrence. Objections to processions and the playing of music before mosques always result in rioting and bloodshed and are the causes of much trouble to the authorities.

The fanatically disposed among Mahomedans are generally the aggressors on such occasions, which tends to show that a good deal of firmness and tact is required to deal with them. Once their fanaticism is excited, they are absolutely impervious to reason and no argument can convince them except forcible restraint. This, of course, is the fruit of crass ignorance in which the Mahomedans generally live in this country. One is inclined to believe that their objection to music before their mosques is not exactly a question of the sacredness in which they hold these mosques and their desire for quietness during their prayer time, but because of their inveterate hatred for what they believe to be a heathen religion. It is time they are taught once for all that their religious susceptibilities ought not to interfere with the freedom and liberties of other people.

The Papacy in Politics, by Mr. Joseph McCabe, published by Messrs. Watts & Co., London, is an eye-opener on the political intrigues of the Papacy in present world politics. In proportion to the waning dominance of the Church of Rome in the West, the Pope is striving to rehabilitate his influence. Fishing in troubled waters has always been the favourite pastime of the Vatican from time immemorial. Just at present it lends its support to any movement that is willing to come to terms with it. In Italy it is hand in glove with Fascism, praising its rule, endorsing its almost incredible brutalities in Abyssinia and elsewhere and urging it

to clandestine acts of aggression in Spain. In Germany it is working hard to win over Hitler who so far, does not seem to be ready as yet to swallow the bait. In Austria and in England it professes to be anti-Nazi and anti-Fascist. In France it sits on the fence, watching for its opportunities, rejoicing that just at present the French are too busy with politics and war scare to bother about religion.

It is bitterly opposed to Communism which, it alleges, teaches doctrines contrary to its own and its great efforts at present are to convince Catholics that this political creed is a pernicious one which threatens to destroy the Catholic religion.

Mr. McCabe's book ruthlessly exposes the methods of the Vatican and debunks its pretensions and claims to civilize mankind. Any one who still believes in the bona fides of the Papacy should read Mr. McCabe's book.

Messrs. Watts & Co. have also published a very interesting book, "Man and His Universe," by Mr. John Langdon-Davies. In it Mr. Langdon-Davies surveys in his own admirable manner the progress of science from the time of Aristotle to our own and how the changes in our conception of the universe have altered our religious speculations. Man, says Mr. Langdon-Davies, forms his religious speculations according to his idea of the universe. The mediaeval idea of the universe, with the Earth as the centre of it and God in the sky above taking a particular interest in it, is still the idea of the masses and the present day religions are all founded on that belief. Whatever changes our conception of the universe undergoes can only affect the religious speculations of the enlightened and this explains why mediaeval religions still flourish so well. It is precisely because priests are afraid that new conceptions may change the existing state of things that they are so hostile to science and its discoveries. They are however safe so long as the general public understand nothing about the same.

The Dean of Canterbury, who with a party consisting of several persons, among whom were two Roman Catholic ladies, had gone on a mission to Spain to acquire first hand information, has on his return journey expressed the opinion in Paris that the Government of Spain was not carrying on a war of aggression against the Church as the rebels and their allies, the Catholic priests, would like the world to believe. The Dean's views were published in the local papers and this has evidently upset the Editor of a Catholic weekly here, the Rev. Father H. Roper, S.J., who has written a letter to the "Times of India" warning its readers not to trust the Dean of Canterbury. According to Father Roper, the Dean, who is a Christian Minister, is known to have Bolshevik tendencies and therefore should not be trusted to speak the truth on the happenings in Spain. This way of raising prejudice against one whose views contradict theirs is characteristic of most Roman Catholic priests. Nobody who is not on their side can speak the truth and can be honest! Father Roper evidently thinks that all the readers of the "Times of India" are a pack of fools incapable of forming their own opinions or using their own judgment.

* * *

The writer has received letters from Rationalists in South Africa, Australia, California and New York and England expressing their satisfaction that "REASON" has reappeared after a period of suspension. This shows how Rationalists in other countries are interested in our movement here, while here people are almost indifferent and lukewarm about it. It is true that the political atmosphere in India, at present, distracts many who might have taken a keener interest in such an intellectual movement as Rationalism. All the same, our intellectuals here, those who realize fully the baneful effects of religions in this country, do not seem to

appreciate the influence for good that Rationalism can do to bind together the members of different communities and break the communal barriers that are such a great evil in India. The greatest enemy of India is, indeed, the communal differences that separate the people so effectively and the cause of it is the different religious beliefs professed by them. Has it never occurred to intelligent and thinking people here that Rationalism is the only Saviour?

* * *

Some fanatics in Bombay are trying to force their views and silly objections on the people. A few have attempted to get the municipality not to permit posters advertising Birth Control simply because they themselves, are opposed to that measure. Others are trying to force the Government to introduce prohibition, forgetting the evils that measure caused in America, where it had a fair trial. In America two or three fanatical religious sects forced that policy on an unwilling public with the results we know. It proved to be a dismal failure and brought a lot of evils in its train such as bootlegging, gangsterism, illicit distillation, kidnapping and other abominable crimes. Do they want India to go through the same experience?

Though personally the writer is an abstainer and fully recognises the evil effects of Alcohol, wholesale prohibition is not likely to cure people of their drinking habits. Some other more harmful substitutes will be found and lawlessness and crimes are bound to increase. Here, in India, one fails to see why such a community as the Mahomedans, for instance, should be anxious to prevent other people, not of their belief, from indulging in alcoholic drinks. It is no business of theirs to force their religious taboos on other people. They should mind their own. How would they like it if the Brahmans try to prevent them from eating meat?

HISTORY IN THE MAKING

(Reproduced from "Free Thinker")

BY CHAPMAN COHIN

Mr. Henry Ford is a very successful motor manufacturer, and whatever credit is given him in that direction he deserves. He is also prone to now and then offering the world advice on matters which have nothing to do with making motors, and then one is apt to murmur the old adage concerning the cobbler and his last. Difficult as it is for some to realize, there is not in this world of ours any necessary connexion between first-class intelligence and money-making; and that Mr. Ford has made a lot of money and has built fleets of motors, appear to be his only claim to world notoriety. He might have made the finest motor in existence, and with that might also have had the finest intelligence in the world. But providing his motor-making had been kept to a small scale, bringing in but a scurvy income of a few thousands a year, the world would have heard little about him. But he employs many thousands of men, he has a huge income, and the latter fact places him among what the author of "1066 and All That" would call "good things." The insolence of wealth has reached its apotheosis under Christian auspices.

The other day Mr. Ford offered the rising generation two pieces of advice. He advised young men not to read "history," because that was "bunk". He also advised them to read newspapers because that was "real history." I expect that some of my Communist friends will see in this advice an exhibition of the stealthy rascality and subtle plotting of Capitalism, but I do not agree with this at all. I have not the high opinion of the intelligence of the Capitalist world that some people have. The "people" are too cheaply bought—and sold, the successes of "capitalism" are too easily achieved, its blunders are too obvious for one to credit it with the possession of so commanding an intelligence. Mr. G. B. Shaw

once said that a boxer with a genuine intelligence would always beat the man who went into the ring with only strength and skill. But, he added, men with first-rate intelligence will not take up with the game. I think the same thing applies to the kings of capital. They are mostly where they are because there are better things in the world than that of building up huge incomes. The man who can organize a huge business, who is quick to seize on the opportunity for new markets, or who can cleverly exploit a new invention, has his place in life, but one should not take that as including all possible places, or place it among the higher ones.

History as Written

Now I can agree with Mr. Ford's statement that history, as written, is mainly bunk. This was said long ago by a very much wiser man than Mr. Ford, by Voltaire, who said that history was nothing more than a pack of lies we tell about the dead. It was also said by another very great man, Henry Fielding. An historian said to Fielding, "You are a writer of fiction." "No," replied Fielding, "It is you who write fiction. The only fiction we novelists have in our writings are the names and dates, and they are the only facts you have in your books." The history taught in our schools is generally correct as to names and dates, but for the rest—! Its aim is to establish desired opinions, not to create an understanding of historical processes. National history is written from a point of view that suits the prejudices and local interests of each nation. The truth about Kings and Queens is never told, save by unfashionable writers whose works are said to "lack authority"; and even their works, by an inevitable reaction, are apt to run to an extreme that the suppression and distortion on the other side invite. It is difficult to reach truth in a partisan atmos-

phere. No one ought to forget the manner in which the history of this country has concealed from the general public the work of such men as Paine, and Robert Owen, and Carlile, and scores of others. And no one can take seriously the accounts that are given in our educational establishments of, say, Victoria, and succeeding monarchs. Those with intelligence can see how a fantastic character for each is created and perpetuated. The official history of the last war is all right with regard to the dates and names. But for the rest—shades of Fielding! The French and German accounts are there also as interesting adventures in the same field of qualified fiction. To write them otherwise would be "unpatriotic."

Newspaper "Bunk"

If we take the word "history" as implying the kind of thing that is mainly taught in our schools, then I can agree with Mr. Ford that newspapers contain "real history". They contain the "bunk," in a "catchy" form, of which official history in all countries is made. From this point of view newspapers contain "real history," because they publish the same kind of information that meets us afterwards in official or standard narratives. They ignore the same things, they enlarge the same topics, they tell the same lies, half-lies and qualified truths. The newspapers contain a history of bunk, because they constitute the bunk of which "history" is made. There is, in fact, a very fine example of this in the newspaper press issues of the same day on which Mr. Ford gave his statement. It will be remembered that in the recent case of the vessel that left America with arms for the Spanish Government, and which was taken in the Bay of Biscay by the rebels, only one man escaped, by swimming. He was picked up by a French boat and "revealed" (to use a favourite newspaper word that suggests great power in discovering the obvious) that the unarmed crew had been hunted over the vessel and shot one after the other. The truth

of this story is evidenced by the fact that bodies have been picked up at sea with revolver shots in the head.

The "News-Chronicle", published the man's story, including the deliberate murder of unarmed seamen. The "Daily Express," the "Daily Telegraph", and other papers, published the man's story of how he escaped, but omitted mention of the killing of the seamen. By this omission, one of the vilest crimes that can be committed at sea is there on record as the mere capture of a vessel running arms to one of the two belligerents. It is the kind of a lie in which British papers and British historians excel. When I was in Glasgow I learned that the Glasgow Corporation had refused to decorate the city for the coronation. The council will give poor children and old people a treat, but it will not decorate. I did not see any news of this in London papers, although there were continuous items of how gladly towns were preparing decorations. During the Jubilee procession of George V., there was a daring banner flung across Fleet Street announcing George the Fifth's "reign of War". The incident was unmentioned in nearly all the papers. In other places incidents of a similar nature occurred, but were not recorded in the press. The picture of uniform rejoicing had to be built up. In quite recent months we had a repetition of the same thing in the case of King Edward VIII. Universally written up as an ideal King, the idol of the people, and with his personal character certified by the Archbishop of Canterbury, based on a knowledge of him from boyhood, he becomes almost in a day the common subject of winks and suggestive jokes, and is forced to abdicate on the ground that the life he has led, and the woman he wishes to marry, make his abdication necessary. Anyone who studies the newspapers, and does not merely read them, will find hundreds of illustrations to the same end.

Certainly if one would study the history of "bunk" and the "bunk" of history, one must study the papers—all

papers from "left" to "right". With each the aim is to stamp certain views of events on the minds of readers; with each the aim is the product of that kind of "mass mentality," which consists in an uncritical acceptance of set views with as great a docility as is exhibited by a devotee of the Roman Catholic Church. What we have before us is, in fact, the method of the Roman Church, rather less skillfully applied, and in the name of freedom and justice instead of in the names of God and the saints.

History and the Press

"Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings—," and so I agree with Mr. Ford (who will probably be surprised to learn that he has the support of such men as Fielding and Voltaire), that history is (mainly) "bunk". But to commend the newspapers as offering "real," that is, reliable history, will not do. Newspapers are a reflection of certain types of mind and character; they are indicative of what certain parties, or churches, or persons wish the public to believe, but that is all. As a whole they are scarcely more reliable than are the advertisements of a quack medicine vendor. They are not to-day even an index of the state of public opinion. They might have been taken as such sixty or seventy years ago. For then newspapers were individually owned, they existed mainly to advance certain opinions, and might be taken as representing the opinions of those who owned or directed them, and those who subscribed to them. Nor were they then under the influence of the large advertisers. To-day no one can say with certainty that the papers represent any opinion whatever—not even of those who own them. Chains of newspapers are common, and in different places advocate different views. Under the same ownership will be found a conservative paper in London, a radical paper in the North of England, and an independent paper in Scotland. The owner will be found advocating one thing here to-day, another and an opposite thing there to-morrow, and often this is

for no other reason than to run a distinctive "stunt." And above the owner stands the big advertisers. It is perhaps too much to expect newspaper readers to remember the Government economy stunt of a few years ago, when the London press, following the Government lead, was begging readers to practise the most rigid economy in their expenditure. That was brought to an abrupt stop by the big advertising firms presenting an ultimatum, that if the people were to be urged not to spend advertisements would be stopped. In twenty-four hours the papers discovered that people ought to spend, since circulation of money meant prosperity all round. And the readers themselves take no note of this instability of advocacy because the vast majority have no very definite opinions of their own. They can be made to believe they are vitally interested in the antics of a royal baby, the new hat of the Duchess of Kent, the shopping of the Queen-mother, the outcome of a cricket match in Australia, the escapades of a film star, or anything else that is put before them, and so long as it is kept before them.

I agree, then, that one must read the newspapers to get an insight into history. But one must read them as an alienist stores up a record of delusions and phobias in order to diagnose the cases with which he has to deal. And, unfortunately, much of our official history is only the history of the newspaper more authoritatively presented. It is the past as the interested present would have us understand it, or it is the present as established powers would have those living believe it to be. To Mr. Ford history is "bunk," but one suspects that this is because he has a suspicion that it is a bunk, which once understood may serve to rectify the bunk of the newspaper world. Perhaps history may even detect that there is much bunk about Mr. Ford and his kind, and when it does that, the bunk of the newspaper world will have less influence than it has to-day. At present I do not see any vital difference between the bunk of history and that of the newspaper. The

latter shows bunk in the making, the former shows us too much of bunk established and regularized. Both should be read, not avoided, for the cure must come from neither the orthodox historian nor the

sensation hunting newspaper, nor from those who are interested in creating a "mechanized" opinion, but from the creation of a public that is above all three.

THE DYNAMICS OF INDIAN PHILOSOPHY

(Continued from last issue)

(Submitted to the Indian Philosophical Congress, Delhi, 1936)

BY

M. V. V. K. RANGACHARI

In Europe on the other hand, science and its application for social purposes through technology has emerged in response to the needs of production. Its first stage was the investigation of the material nature, in physics, geology, etc., the second stage was concerned with life in the organic world (biology, etc.) and lastly it is now concerning itself with consciousness (psychology, sociology, etc.). The small-scale production in the pre-capitalist era based on private ownership of tools by the worker was replaced by factory-production, and social science presented fresher qualities of adjustment. The scientific machine was a new social venture that went on increasing in quantity. Capitalist accumulation proceeded until the many small capitalists are replaced by the few. The expropriation of the many and the formation of huge combines like steel-trusts etc., and industrial concerns in England, Europe and America concentrate business and capital in a few hands. The workers are driven to amalgamate, through unemployment and misery, and the spirit of revolt developed. The concentration of means of production and the organisation of labour reach a point where they burst their capitalist covering. When private property is dissolved, the expropriators are expropriated. The dialectical movement exemplifying the negation of the negation is seen where through over-expansion, the capitalist that negated the small scale

producer negates his own system, falling a prey to the clamours of labour. Through excess, even nectar may prove injurious as venom (amritopamam pariname vishamiva, Gita, XVIII, 38). From the capitalist, the centre shifts on to the peasant and worker who attain prominence in social organisation. The return of the small-scale producer of the pre-capitalist period into power in the guise of the mass-producer in nationalised factories and farms, is the negation of the power of capital, that itself negated the importance of the workers of the earlier stage. The rule of negation of negation is the paraphrase of the homeopathic formula 'similia similibus curantur' (cf. ushnam ushnena seetalam). Treatment by similars in collective application is the method of Dialectical materialism.

The paradox of social order negating itself is accomplished through an invisible process. Action through inaction, and inaction in visible action, is the formula (Karmanyakarma yah pasyedakarmani cha karma yah, Gita, IV, 18). Astronomical bodies are not determined by apparent motion. Seemingly at rest, a body may be undergoing rapid changes, like the sleeping top. This dynamic sleep is Yoga, alive and active in the stillness of night while the ordinary pre-occupations of life convey no sublime significance (Cf. Yanisha sarvabhutanam, tasyam jagarti samyami; Gita, II, 69). Sunlight re-

veals objects on the earth, but it screens from view, the brilliance of the stars. The darkness of night closes down the world but displays the glory of the heavens. Darkness is the negation of the sun, but starlight is the negation of that negation. Vice versa, starlight is negation of darkness but the sun is the negation of that negation. Marxian dialectics are simply the application to social life of the principles of Hegel's idealism. But the application of the formula of negation need not stop there. Fascism agrees in principle that the economic structure of society shapes the political structure. As democracy does not correctly reflect the capitalist industrial society, the Fascist would construct a political form in the Corporate State which does express the economic structure. There again arises the application of the formula of negating the negation. If Socialism is the child of capitalism, Fascism is yet another issue in the pedigree. The movement of economic life not only determines but is determined by social conditions, as any isolate has been stated already to operate in that double manner.

The operation of the law of negation of the negative does not result in the return to identity with the past, for that is impossible on the fleeting canvas of time-space. It expresses similarity in a wide sense, with due regard to history, much as the drug which the homeopath prescribes for known symptoms of disease after strict proof, and on valid potentisation. The cure by similars in crude form may not help. Herein we discover the second of the laws of Dialectical Materialism, the transition of quantity into quality. Heat applied to water beyond a point converts it into steam. The withdrawal of the same form of energy below a point freezes it into ice. Here then is the principle that variations of quantity are capable of producing qualitative differences, as ice, water and steam are qualitatively very divergent.

The evolution of new qualities is a familiar biological phenomenon. The

sprouting of plant life, from inorganic matter, the emergence of lower animals, the dawn of consciousness in varied levels reaching up to man, and the aggregation into families, tribes, and nations each one of them illustrates the passage of quantity and mass into qualitative differentiation. The pressure that the mass exerted on its own sides broke after certain points its own body, and gave birth to new qualities. This pressure may have been conditioned by the environment, as when a passing star is supposed to have occasioned, by the gravitatory pull, in the mass of the sun, the protrusion of a column of incandescent matter that was to be the material constituting the members of the family of planets comprising the solar system. The whole drama of its formation, the burning gaseous metallic vapours, liquid globes rotating in their orbits, their gradually forming crusts, vegetation, life and man, at every turn massive quantities, huge stretches of time and space, and emergence of over fresh qualities, these mark the dynamic march of the universe. The shifts in the centres of gravity due to variable quantities produce new features widely differing in quality from the old. It is no less true of social factors, than it is applicable to other objects or isolates. An extensive social organism evinces utterly different qualities according as the lead is taken by one or other of its constituent agencies. The efficacy of infinitessimals is no less true sociologically than in other fields. Why among millions of names Shakespeare or Dante, Hitler or Mussolini should occur on many lips would remain a problem if the law of potentisation did not hold. We know that certain known quantities behave and determine immense forces. To investigate the conditions of their potency is the pursuit of true knowledge.

As age advances, an individual may grow into peevish discontentment, though the sum-total of his acquisitions may have exceeded that at any time before. Even so, the reactions upon capitalism may proceed within itself. It may cease to become satisfied with its own returns. Again,

the clamour of the impoverished mass of labour, whose fruits it was accustomed to appropriate may force the relaxation of the profit-motive. An increasing disparity between capital and labour changes the character of the struggle. From the claim to mere increase in wages, or shorter hours of work, the problem may become one of greater importance with regard to the handling of power. Strikes, paralysis of business, lock-outs and chaos result. Slight hunger is said to be healthy to whet the appetite. But hunger long unfed will threaten destruction. Moderate feeding is healthy and conduces to health. Over-feeding leads to disease and dyspepsia. There are particular points where quantities give rise to new qualities. When reform allays, or where revolutions occur depends on the discovery of these crucial points. Socialism and Fascism are alike the result of the perpetuation of the inconsistency between capital and labour. Both indicate the maladjustment of the economic machinery.

The emergence of new qualities by repetition of constant practice (abhyasa) is alluded to in the Gita: Abhyasat ramate yatra duhkchantancha nigachhati, yattadagre vishamiva pariname amrutopamam, XVIII, 37). Even venom may be brought down into use as a nectar, by varying the dose, or frequency. For the apparent divergence in the nature of the effects produced is but the quantitative difference at the source, translated in sequence of the causal chain. To get at the origin of this qualitative evolution we should look into the structure of the isolate itself. The extreme complexity of any unit under examination will reveal itself readily. An economic collective unit called society is the best example. In the capitalist era, production is for profit rather than for social service. The need of a constantly expanding market for its products chases the producer over the whole world. It must nestle everywhere, settle everywhere, establish connections everywhere. This exploitation of the world market, gives a cosmopolitan character to production, and consumption in every country. It

has drawn from under the feet of industry the national ground on which it stood.

Capitalism strove toward higher prices and scarcity. The scientific movement on which it was founded on the other hand functions from its very nature for plenty. Here then is the fundamental law of the interpenetration of opposites. Capitalism calls into being and becomes interpenetrated with something that must assist its own contradiction or annihilation. Technology works for mass-production, which is detrimental to scarcity and dependant profit. As a growing organism carrying its own seed of decay, as the magnet has two inconsistent poles, as bodies are charged with positive and negative current, the Dvandvas of life interpenetrate, coexist, and complicate all objects of study. The Gita speaks of immortality and death, Being and Non-Being in One. (Amritanchaiva mrytyuscha, sadasatchaham, IX, 19). Scientific mass-production and the profit-motive dohows social service co-exist not as static unchanging isolates, separate and unconnected, but the one evoked for the support of the other. But for scientific technology, capitalism would not have been where it has come to stay. But for the capitalist impetus, science would not have invented so richly in her time. Scarcity stands for the well-being of the privileged few, as it means larger dividends. The increase of technical application worked in the contrary direction. Science has turned to be a danger to society in more than one way. The great mass of low-paid labour lost the purchasing power. Mechanical appliances and labour-saving devices increased unemployment. While the employment of martial genius has been greatly responsible for unprovoked wars of aggression and wholesale destruction. Vice versa, capitalism itself would frustrate science, by endeavouring to restrict production to safeguard rich returns for the investment. Many a capitalist enterprise would sigh in relief if science were given a holiday at least temporarily. For, even while machinery and plant were being installed

for producing into market a given article, the expert in another laboratory comes forward with improved editions of the same based on some new discovery. The contradictions involved in the capital-labour problem of the western class society are the collective presentation in society of what is inborn in individual constitutions. The human body is a conflict of contending forces, pulling and pushing in opposing directions; to treat the person it needs to diagnose the several tendencies of the complex entity. The preponderance of any disposition for a time determines the character of the individual at that stage, even as the frequency of his pulse on VATA, PITTA or Cough goes to characterise the malady. Our innate qualities of reason, impetuosity, or inertia (Satwa, Rajas, and Tamas) are themselves alternating factors (Gunas) dependent upon the temporal conditions of nourishment, culture and discipline. Through the variation in the play of these forces, operating externally as also from within, characters and dispositions, individual as well as collective, exchange their places to be replaced by others. The exploration of human personality is the latest phase of the western science.

This movement of social interest from the material world to the world of organic life and then to the world of human personality is the rhythmic development of science from physics through biology to psychology and social science. The ultimate aim of humanity is not the production of the factory-hand for turning out profits and dividends under individualist capitalism or collectivised economy. The recognition of the supreme claims of humanity places Indian thought in the forefront of all ideology. "Puru-shanna param kinchit sa kashtha sa paragatih" says the Katha Upanishad (1-iii, 11). Nothing is superior to the Purusha, that is the end, that is the supreme goal. The conception of universal life as Hiran-yagarbha wherein are aggregated infinite individual souls is an Indian product. Collectivised life is promoted not by compe-

titive profit-motive, but through the realisation of the unity of existence conceived as the highest duty. The cosmic self is superior to the short-sighted calculations of profit and loss within the economic understanding of the machinist mind. There is nothing nobler than man, repeats the Mahabharata. "Na manushyat sreshthataram hi kinchit". Duty to the race and the interests of the larger life are recognised as the one motive valid for all human enterprise. "Karyamityeva yat-karma niyatam kriyaterjuna, sangam tyaktva, phalamchaiva sa tyagassatviko mayah," (Gita, XVIII, 9). The sense of duty towards humanity, relinquishment of selfish attachment, and also the elimination of the profit-motive is the highest form, the pure Satwic activity. Non-intervention pacts based upon fear of suffering, or of loss of possession and prestige does not obtain the true fruit of Tyaga. Humanism was the axis on which the Indian systems rotated. The social purpose of science is bound to gain greater recognition while the dictatorships of the modern world crushing human liberties under iron heel are passing reactions. The profit urge in all forms defeats its own purpose as there are limits to which all Rajasic and Tamasic activity may tend.

Yoga is skill in action that maintains the balance. Human skill, the collective genius of the race, discovers the true centre of gravity that should maintain the balance, irrespective of the minor considerations of happiness and pain, profit and loss, success and defeat in provincial limitations. (Sukhadukhe same kritva, labhalabhau, jayajayau). In the process of that discovery some disturbing forces may be ruled out, but negation of not proceeding from selfish motive, where reason is not contaminated, is no obstacle to social evolution. History is witness to evolution moving at pedestrian pace, running downhill at accelerating speed, leaping across a stream in the valley and climbing slowly up the next slope. It depended on the setting in which the feet were laid and the momentum of forces

that drove onward. The springs of endeavour were free from the taint of exploitation for gain and the crushing of personal life and freedom among people wholly content with what came, not very particular of possessing the home, yet firm in devotion. (Santushtho yenakenachit aniketasthiramatih, Gita, XII, 19). The collective national home in the west, and hotel life in America is breaking up the home, but the difference lay in the urge behind. Detachment, not to identify oneself with son, wife or home, equilibrium when events wished-for and unwished-for occurred (Gita XIII, 10, Asaktiranabhishwangah putra dara gruhadishu, nityancha samachittatvamishtanishto-

papattishu) is far removed from the state nurseries, companionate alliances, and collective messes of the world in our time. Back of the modern social forms, capitalist or collectivised, is the rush of speed, the feeling that somehow one division of humanity is put to compete in a race with another, a mad unbalanced strain upon tolerance springing through fear of internal dissension and aggression from without. The aftermath of the machine age forgets the human hand behind. The message of scientific humanism is yet to open a page before the dynamics of Indian Philosophy stands revealed. Cocanada, 13-9-1936.

DIDEROT, THE ATHEIST-3

(Continued from last issue)

(Translated from "L' Idée Libre" Paris)

BY

R. D. KARVE

The Supreme Being, The Miracles and the Original Sin. Since the day when he published his "Pensees Philosophiques" (philosophical thoughts) in 1745, followed in 1749 by "Letter on the Blind," Diderot remained irrevocably atheist. In his "Reve de d'Alembert" (Dream of d'Alembert), he recognises in nature no other cause and no other principle than chance; he does not believe that God 'from whom we get Reason can exact its sacrifice' because He will then be like a juggler who conjures away what he has given". In his 15th "Thought", he affirms "that there is no god; that creation is a chimera; that an eternal world is not more difficult to imagine than an eternal spirit; that because we cannot imagine how the universe was created, it is ridiculous to get over the difficulty by imagining a being whom we do not understand any better; that if the marvels that we see indicate some intelligence, the disorders which reign in the moral sphere annihilate all idea of providence". He says

also that "if everything is the work of God, everything should be the best possible, because if it is not the best possible, it argues either impotence or malevolence in God...."

As for the Supreme Being, from the picture people draw of him; his inclination to anger; the rigour of his vengeance, a comparison of the number of people he leaves to perish with the number of those he helps, an honest soul would be tempted to wish that he did not exist". Besides, the idea of God is of no use, since the thought, that there is no god has never frightened anybody.

After all, what is God? Children are asked this question at the same time and by the same persons who tell him that there are spirits, ghosts and werewolves. This shows us clearly that God is a creation of nurses, and they have made him so wicked that no good father would ever wish to resemble this celestial father.

Speaking of miracles, he says "Why are the miracles of Jesus Christ true and those of Mahomed and others false? Personally, Diderot would easily believe "one honest person who assured him that His Majesty had just gained a complete victory over the allies; but even if all Paris assured him that a dead man had come to life, he would not believe it." In one of his "thoughts", he gives the instance of a man shamming lameness, who suddenly threw away his crutches and pretended to be miraculously cured. He says anybody who saw a miracle in that was simply determined to see it. Is it not the same with almost all the miracles which occur in places of pilgrimage?

In thought 43, he makes fun of "original sin". Ninon de l'Enclos has called it a funny kind of sin. And so it is, because after it was committed, God merely condemns Eve to suffer the pangs of child-birth. If the sin was merely eating a fruit, what connection has it with child-birth? To show that there is nothing but verbosity in religion, Diderot writes: "God the Father judges men deserving of eternal vengeance; God the Son thinks them worthy of infinite mercy; and the Holy Ghost remains neutral. How is one to reconcile this catholic verbiage with the unity of Divine will?" Later, he emphasizes the imperfection of Divinity: "God first gives one law to men. Then he abolishes it because he thought he was mistaken. Does a perfect being correct himself?" Further he adds: "If Reason is a gift from God and one can say as much of Faith, God has made us two incompatible and contradictory presents."

Long before Lamarck, Diderot laid down the essential principles of transformism: "People think that animals have always been what they are at present. What folly! We do not know what they have been, any more than we know what they are going to become. The worm may perhaps become a big animal and the big animal a worm.

What races of animals have preceded us and what races will follow us? Who knows? Everything changes, but the world remains.

Diderot detested the representatives of religion. In his 'Plan for a University', he says: "The priest, good or bad, is always an equivocal person, a being suspended between heaven and earth, similar to the figure which a physicist can raise or lower at discretion, depending on the greater or less expansion of the bubble of air it contains. Leagued sometimes with the people against their sovereign, sometimes with the sovereign against the people, he is not at all content to pray to gods except when he is indifferent as to the result. He disposes of spirits openly or privately according to his audacity or pusillanimity. His profession makes him hard and secretive. . . . While other people in general only approve of what is good, the priest usually only approves of what is bad. . . . The priest is by profession, hypocrite, intolerant and cruel. He is superior to kings, because kings can only make dukes, ministers, nobles and generals, while priests make gods. At the altar, the king bends his knee and his head inclines under the hand of the priest like that of the meanest serf. If one asks a priest what a king is, if he dares to be honest, he will reply: "He is either my enemy or my subordinate officer, carrying out my orders." Sacerdotal government is the worst of all. There is no harder or more absolutist government than that which is exercised on behalf of gods. Wherever priests have ruled, one still finds vestiges of their excesses in the excessive veneration exacted by them when they marched with a sceptre in one hand and a censor in the other. In support of this statement, he cites certain Asiatic countries where entirely naked priests come out of their solitude at certain times and go about the streets ringing a bell to announce their passage. "Women of all conditions crowd round them, prostrate themselves at their feet and reverently kiss a part of

their body which decency prevents me from naming." In France, it was not so, but if one asks the curate of St. Roch, who pretends, seven times a week, to call God from Heaven to earth, who eats Him and distributes Him to ten thousand persons at Easter, if one asks this curate what he thinks of his holy ministry as compared to the highest civil functions, the magistrature for instance, one would be surprised at the disdainful reply. His tribunal is not magnificent; it is only a small box against a cold pillar of a church; but when he is inside, he considers himself as the representative of Him who has to judge the living and the dead one day; he has the power to bind and to release, to absolve or keep back; heaven ratifies the decrees pronounced by him, and its portals are opened or closed at his will. When he sees at his feet the humiliated monarch confessing his sins, imploring his mediation, accepting the expiation which he may be pleased to prescribe, how can he judge too highly of

himself? And if, to the pride of all these extraordinary prerogatives, he joins that of making laws, governing and commanding armies, what can simple mortals be before him? Look at the Jesuits, sovereigns and pontiffs in Paraguay, and see how they treated their subjects. These poor devils work incessantly and possess nothing. If they commit a small fault, the Father calls them, makes a sign, at which they take off their lower garments, lie down on the ground, receive lashes with a leather-strap, get up, put on their clothes, thank the good Father, salute him very humbly, kiss the end of his sleeve and go away, gay and contented if possible! This is what happened, less than 150 years back in States under the government of priests! And this is what will happen if the Church realises its dream of tyrannical domination, insatiable lust for power.

"May the good sense of our contemporaries preserve civilised countries from this calamity!"

ISLAM AND WOMEN

BY

NUR JEHAN

In this article I propose to deal with the position of women, in theory and practice, in Islam.

Now-a-days there is lot of big talk about the position of women in Islam in the Muhammedan Press. Some writers claim that Islam is the only religion giving equal rights to both the sexes. It is a lie pure and simple.

As far as theoretical rights are concerned, the only authority is the Koran. And I shall confine myself to it.

Koran sanctions polygamy, slavery and concubinage. We are told by the modern apologists that Muhammed permitted four wives, provided they are treated equally, impartially and fairly. This is a master-piece of diplomacy, which

entirely eclipses our Baldwins, Hoares and Simons. It seems, as a writer puts it, "either he had his tongue in his cheek, or that he had a most sublime and inexplicable faith in the masculine character, for it is fairly safe to assume that in most quadrilateral matrimonial circles, the youngest and prettiest wife would, naturally, receive more attention than her middle-aged and caustic-tongued colleagues.*"

We are also told by the modern apologist that polygamy was allowed, because there was a great surplus of women in those days in Arabia, but they forget that Koran claims to be a divine revelation for the whole universe and for all time.

The Koran not only says that women

are inferior to men and calls them chattels, but goes as far as calling them a "pollution".

"They (women) are a pollution. Separate yourself therefore from women and approach them not, until they are cleansed, etc." (Ch. II v. 222.).

"Your wives are your field; go in, therefore to your field as ye will," etc. (Ch. II v. 223.).

"Men are superior to women on account of the qualities with which God hath gifted the one above the other, and on account of the outlay they make from their substance for them. Virtuous women are obedient and careful, during their husband's absence, because God hath of them been careful. But chide them for whose refractoriness ye have cause to fear; remove them into beds apart, and scourge them. (Ch. IV, v. 33.) that is, in other words, Koran gives the husband the right to whip his wives, if he suspects them of misconduct.

The Koran provides for men "ever virgin houries" in heaven, but ignores the sex-urge of women. (By the way—are women admitted into heaven?)

The Koran assumes everywhere that divorce is the sole prerogative of husband.

A husband can divorce his wife without giving any reason whatsoever. There is no need even to go to court for divorce. A husband has just to tell his wife publicly that she is divorced. That's all! So much for the theory.

In practice Mussalman women are in the rigid seclusion of the harem, all over the world.

In Turkey, they have achieved freedom not because of Islam, but in spite of it. The downfall of Islam helped the liberation of women.

Still, all over the Islamic world, woman is a chattel, purdah (veil) or yashmak is still rigidly enforced, and polygamy practised.

In India it is not uncommon to find educated Mussalmans having more than one wife, strictly in purdah.

The husband is compelled to support his wife, after the divorce for one year only, and often she is turned out from her house for no reason whatsoever, beyond the fact that her husband is tired of her and desires some one younger and better. There are very few chances of re-marriage for women, in other words divorce means the end of a woman's life.

"The unalterable edicts of the Koran, backed by all the fanaticism of the Muhammedan religion make the elevation of women impossible under Islam.

"The complete subjugation of the female to man-made laws is the keynote of all the religions.

"Religion not only makes man and woman servile, but it has the supreme art of teaching them to love their chains." (C. Cohn).

*Major C. S. Jarvis.

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POPULAR FRONTS

BY

M. V. V. K. RANGACHARI

My friend, Isweran, who had returned from the west a decade ago, had no experience of modern developments that shot forth the new political beauties in these fronts. But I suspected even then that the world was getting ready for a new order of life when the Shastris chanted mystic Mantras over his sin of foreign travel. In a far-away communal village, his face beamed with renewed piety confirmed by the re-appearance of the thick-set caste-mark. None questioned the sincerity of his return into the community, despite a few old dames who questioned the propriety of the Prayaschitta for a delinquency that was voluntarily undertaken in having journeyed to England. The efficacy of the popular front was however very complete, and society was whole with him as prominent leader.

Since then, many who had been temporarily out from caste-surroundings, some of them having been inside jails for the cause of the country, have seen the wisdom of closing up the ranks with the orthodox people in the countryside, so that the unity of life may not be affected. I had all along been impressed with the harmony of society so that no offence may be permitted to creep into formulary observance consequent on strange intellectual exercise. When the village worshipper blesses the shoulders by touching the divine feet (Satagopam), simply bow in all humility for no one ever knew what it was about. If the priest asks you to touch water, or have three sips thereof, simply obey, because not to do so would offend the popular mind. Where all your people are steeped in ritual, it is no good protesting. Purchase peace, and sell also, if the cost is nothing dearer than the thread. The sanctity of the thread lies in the way of binding together, and unity thus bundled up is no mean achievement.

In official circles until recently, there

was another favoured front. The popularisation of Khadi reacted on the loyal mind into softness for imported piece-goods. Those that had anything to do with the White Sahibs and their close following acquired the taste for black Alpaca as if to smoothen the path of their dealing. The relativity of popular fronts is manifest, here, as elsewhere, when the tried politician who had till the evening donned the foreign pieces in office, changes into the folding cap, and the coarse broad-bordered upper cloth above Khadi shirt and Dhoti, before attacking eager audiences brimming with national spirit. Here are two types of fronts, which call forth two converse deals. He should be an obtrusive misfit who would dare to enter the parlour of the District Magistrate clad in Khadi or get on the platform of an eventide meeting for the furtherance of the country's cause robed in 'home-spun' tweeds and Alpacas. The fronts are apart, and who would offend them without cause or provocation? Perhaps the impression of lost causes before British Officers merely through the place of manufacture of the dress of counsel is quite unfounded, but the clamour of the denunciatory meetings when politicians fail to fall into line with current notions of sartorial propriety cannot as easily be set at naught.

In missionary colonies, where the material worked upon is gathered from the lower order of social life, the obtrusion of sceptic rationalism would alike appear to be an unwanted perversity. The capacity to doubt, to question the fundamentals of the creeds, to go down to the maintainability of the dogmas, is not the favoured spot of evangelical work. The solace of faith, and all the peace that passeth understanding flowing therefrom, remains at the front gates of the churches, chapels, and other mission compounds. Even their hospitals admi-

nister drugs, but look to Jesus for their efficacy. To enter these institutions and begin to think is not to do appropriately. Thinking of popular something, let me not bring down the frowns of the clergy on my head by implying that theirs is not the place for thinking in any sense. They do think also, such thoughts as are conformable to their theological doctrines. The rub comes when one tries to think differently, applying the canons of ordinary thought to their pet theories. Rather shall I say that they expect people to behave themselves according to their teaching than think anything for themselves and act up to their independent judgment. There is the risk which they would not take if it may be helped, through inquiry, index or otherwise. Conformity in behaviour is their rule, however much the disquiet caused by the conflict of loyalties between reason and faith.

Nor is this enforced conformity the peculiar heritage of any single creed. All are agreed that the duty of the individual is to bow down to Swa Dharma (one's own creed). And there should be no deflection from the common track, lest the minds of the masses be unsettled. (Cf. Na Buddhi bhedam janayodagnanam karmasanginam, Gita, III, 26, also Tanakritsnavido mandan kritsnavinnavichalayet, III, 29). For affecting to follow the traditional path, there is the highest textual authority. And the presentation of the united front is the collective political counterpart of the individual instinct to appear to march along with the community, without obtruding individual divergences.

The spirit of accommodation, of compromise, or toleration for other points of view often informs three efforts at face-saving devices. But the charge of dissembling, of passing for somebody while really one has no right to do so, is laid at their door. The critic easily trips over the diversity of human life, and the complex setting in which it brings up these conditions. The heavens do not fall if a harijan puts on the sacred thread and passes off as one of the twice-born, any

more than when my friend who kept his terms in England, boarding with a British family, returned home and renewed his Sandhyavandanam. School children may cry down the platform speaker in Khadi who had just returned from a visit to one of those bureaucrats who would tolerate nothing of the kind. I say, why should one obtrude his convictions and risk his business when a little adjustability was all that was needed to smoothen life?

The beginning of larger policy lie embedded in these trivialities. We now read of Popular Front Governments in the west. It means that the Front Benches are patch-work. The capacity to work together in spite of obvious differences of outlook is the special prerogative of man. In no other stage of biological evolution has this inherent incompatibility in structure been bridged by the conscious alignment of function. The tiger must kill the lamb, unless the former assumed the human shape, when the right to dissemble, to pretend to be friendly, arises. And there are the motives of defence and the need for collective action that bring about the shaping of these heterogeneous yet united fronts.

I like foreign travel, with its popular front of Prayaschittam. I like those who left their home and are restored by purifying water. In all innocence I like the Satagopam, and the priest's ritual. I shall not offend the official susceptibilities by wearing Khadi, nor the audiences by not wearing the same. Though aiming to rationalise, I shall not obtrude my thoughts into the mission compound. I shall in every way seek to conform to existing modes of conduct but, withal, I have great suspicion that the sands under the feet are fast washing away. The seeming conformity is the shell from whence the kernel has already disappeared. If the popular fronts win at last, it is because essentially the wants of humanity are common, and the remedies therefor lie in the same direction. Reason that criticises also advises circumspection, slow advance, and persistent effort though yielding at all but essential points.

REASON

The Journal of The Rationalist
Association of India.

5-12, Queen's Road,
Bombay.

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*All contributions should be addressed to the
Editor "REASON" Jagjivan Mansions, 13, New
Bhatwadi, Bombay 4, and should reach the editor on
or before the 15th of each month.*

*The writers of the articles in this journal are
themselves responsible for the views expressed and do
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Business Manager "REASON" care of the Rationalist
Association of India. Concession rates to members.*

AT THE SECRETARY'S TABLE

We have already mentioned in these columns that the energies of the Executive Committee are at present directed at putting the Association on a solid basis and we expect support and suggestions from our members. We request our members to continue their efforts to secure new members. They have just to send

us names and addresses of persons interested in our movement and we shall send them "Reason" copies and other information.

The Executive Committee in a meeting held on 7th April, 1937, has started a Reserve Fund of the R.A.I. and we request our members, friends and sympathisers to contribute to it generously.

The Reserve Fund—which in itself means that the money collected will not be used but only the proceeds or interest from it will if necessary be utilised—will enable us to meet certain recurring expenses and we need not here repeat the other activities we shall be able to undertake.

We, therefore, again request our friends to contribute their mite. Every help rendered will be a memorial unto those who, by so doing, will be supporting the "best of causes".

Those sending donations should please clearly state whether the amount is for the Reserve Fund or to be utilised for the present expenses.

It is indeed disappointing to note that although we had announced in two issues that we were sending "Reason" by V.P.P., some of our members have refused the V.P.P. and thus put the Association to unnecessary expense. A card informing us that a V.P.P. should not be sent to them would have been much appreciated.

We are thankful to the following for having kindly accepted the V.P.P. and we are pleased to welcome new members into our ranks and we hope they will be long associated with us in our fight for intellectual liberty and rationalism:—

D. S. Tanavde, Bombay; Dr. C. L. D'Avoine, Bombay; I. D'Avoine, Bombay; Claude D'Avoine, Bombay; E. D'Avoine, Bombay; T. H. Modi, Bombay; Lt.-Col. S. Sokhey, I.M.S., Bombay; K. C. Sen, I.C.S., Bombay; Goolamali C. Moolji, Bombay; Lt. B. H. N. Bunsah,

Reason gains all men by compelling none

—Aaron Hill.

REASON

THE JOURNAL OF THE RATIONALIST ASSOCIATION OF INDIA

"TO COMBAT ALL RELIGIOUS AND SOCIAL BELIEFS AND CUSTOMS THAT CANNOT STAND THE TEST OF REASON AND TO ENDEAVOUR TO CREATE A SCIENTIFIC AND TOLERANT MENTALITY AMONG THE PEOPLE OF THIS COUNTRY." *"Objects of the Rationalist Association of India."*

New Series.

JUNE 1937

No. 5.

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NOTES & HAPPENINGS

BY

Dr. C. L. D'AVOINE

Theosophy is, for us Rationalists, a curious mysticism, a form of speculation aiming at the knowledge of the Ultimate Reality, or the Omnipresent Spirit, in other words, God, by means of intuition and contemplative illumination. Some Theosophists even claim direct communion with that Spirit. It also assumes the existence of a transcendental energy in Man which is immortal and which at death quits the body to live in different astral planes. It is this immortal something which becomes reincarnated into another human being and thus *ad infinitum*.

Reading the literature of this creed leaves one in a state of bewilderment and mental confusion which one must neces-

sarily experience on trying to understand a doctrine without head or tail. The writer occasionally gleans through the columns of one of its organs in Bombay—The Aryan Path—which, at times, contains articles of interest contributed by such Rationalist writers as Mr. C. E. M. Joad, Sir Alexander Cardew and Mr. F. Gould. Most of its articles, however, are by hard-boiled Theosophists who seem to take a delight in the peculiar kind of speculations. They have a jargon of their own, often expressed in elegant and cultured language which masks to a certain extent the absurdity of their theses.

* * *

Here is a sample of the peculiar jargon of these people, generally expressed

in a 'Niagara' of words, which creates a good deal of sound but has little or no meaning. This is from an article in the Aryan Path:—"The materialist is unconscious of the transcendental side of his own being. The spiritualist is unaware of the substantial nature of his own soul. Each can maintain his position only by shutting eyes and ears to the testimony of his brother"..... "Unity in the midst of Duality, the manifested. The Identity in the midst of both subject and object of perception.—This is the Pythagorean Triad which animates Gods, Heroes and Men along with the rest of Nature in vast inclusive Original". The fortunate man who penned such sublime thoughts must have retired, after burning the midnight oil, with the full consciousness that Nature has blessed him with a vision so divine as to enable him to visualise not only the transcendental side of his own being, but also the substantial nature of his own soul. One wonders what must be the weight of that soul. It must surely have one.

* * *

It is not the fault of the writer, if the "Times of India" is every now and then falling in his ink-well. In a leaderette on "Law and Religion", that great oracle of our City, commenting on the Blasphemy Bill which is now before Parliament, utters some profound sayings in its issue of the 15th May last. It confesses that "in large communities of civilized people there is open mockery of much that men held in sanctity and veneration for centuries of progress". It recognises and laments "that the hold of religion on the conduct of nations and individuals has been relaxed to a dangerous extent". It fears that on account of this, "European civilization is heading towards perdition without the control of Christianity and the moral restraint and the spirit of reverence which every true religion inspires in its followers." It talks of a new fanaticism which, it alleges, is swaying the minds of men which may prove, in the end, more perilous for human destiny than the attitude of mind which sent heretics to the stake. It is seriously of opi-

nion "that the laws against atheism and blasphemy are indispensable for the preservation of human society" and lastly it thinks that "if religion has failed partially, science without the wholesome fear of unknown powers and a spirit of reverence and Christianity must needs lead to total destruction".

* * *

Only a narrow-minded, short-sighted and bigoted Christian could have compassed so much rank nonsense in the small space of a leaderette. We, Rationalists, are familiar enough with such fatuous twaddle and it does amuse us to see how religionists of the type of that writer account for the failure of Christianity in Europe and their childish fear that wholesale disbelief in that religion, will surely be followed by awful consequences. Old women of both sexes have been saying this for centuries; each time they imagined that people were losing faith in that gloomy religion. But the world has always managed to survive all these dark hints and predictions, and, strange to say, has progressed towards civilization in the proportion that people have lost their faith in that superstitious creed.

People who utter such nonsense are usually blessed with short memories and poor imaginations. They conveniently forget what the World was during the Age of Faith; the savagery, cruelty, selfishness and barbarity of these days. They forget the religious wars; the misery and hardship they entailed; the hatred, bitterness and fury that stalked in their trail; the ignorance, bigotry, intolerance and fanaticism of those days and the state of society on account of the same. They forget the barbarity and hardness of our Penal codes based on religious teaching; the condition of the lowly in their filthy slums, their neglect and their moral degradation. They forget the condition of labour then, especially the slavery of women and children in the workshops and mines of pious employers. This age of ours is a heaven compared with those times when religion had a firm hold on

individuals and nations. Christianity is failing wholesale, not partially, because its supernatural fables excite the laughter of the enlightened. It has become a mockery on account of the pretensions, hypocrisy and make-belief of most of its ministers.

* * *

Just imagine, friends, how shallow the writer of that article must have been when he said that unless people have a wholesome fear of unknown powers and the restraining influence of Christian morality and reverence, total destruction must soon follow! One, of course, is accustomed to hear such rubbish from priests and parsons, but to read this in the leading columns of a respectable newspaper makes one gasp!

* * *

A religion which requires the help of the police to protect it from mockery and ridicule must be in a sorry plight indeed! But one fails to understand why the profession of atheism must be a menace to society. Any fool cannot become an Atheist. To become one connotes a high degree of enlightenment, intelligence and culture to which the ignorant and thoughtless masses cannot aspire. This explains why Atheists, who have a well defined philosophy of life and are enlightened by the dictates of common sense and Reason, are generally the best behaved and respectable people in any community. The statistics of criminal records all over the world show that unbelievers possess the lowest percentage among criminals and yet there are millions of unbelievers all over. Are such people likely to disturb human society?

* * *

Few events in the world have caused such partisanship as the present Spanish Civil War. This has been brought about by the political leanings of people and also their religious sympathies. Soon after its inception, dishonest and unscrupulous propagandists all over the world set to work to create confusion in the minds of people. The greatest offenders in this respect were a

large number of Roman Catholic priests who misled their flock wholesale with all the lies and fabrications they could invent. They raised the "Red" bogey everywhere to prejudice people against the Spanish Government which they represented to be a body out to destroy civilization, religion and society. They called the Rebels the saviours whom God had appointed to deliver Spain from the diabolical doings of the Reds and tales of horror were spread about the cruelty, barbarity, savagery and impiety of the Loyalists. The world was made to shudder at the deliberate burning of churches, the shooting of priests and nuns and the wholesale persecution of innocent Catholics. The Rebels won a good deal of sympathy on this account and in a country like England where the very name of Bolshevism is execrated and detested, General Franco found many supporters and sympathisers, especially among the higher classes of people.

* * *

To-day, the truth is gradually leaking out. Hundreds of people worthy of faith and in responsible positions in life, hailing from many countries, who have visited Spain for first-hand knowledge, are now publishing their experiences and expressing their opinions. A good many of them are Roman Catholics. It would appear that the Spanish Government is a very respectable organisation composed of people of many shades of political opinions. The whole country is loyal to the Government and people all over are determined to resist to the last the Rebels with their mercenaries. This explains the failure of the Rebels, so far, though they have the help of thousands of Moors, Germans and Italians.

It would appear that it was the Rebels, themselves, who created a reign of terror and frightfulness in their passage through the country, which they coolly laid at the door of the Government. The following recent testimony speaks for itself.

* * *

Among the party which accompanied the Dean of Canterbury to Spain were a number of Roman Catholic priests and laymen as well as some Protestant ministers and laymen. On the return journey of the party, a lecture was given in Paris on what they saw in Spain. Before a large audience in Paris on the 9th of April last, several speakers gave a vivid description of all they had seen in Spain! Among the speakers were the Revd. Father E. O. Fradell, Vicar of the Church of St. Clement, London; Mr. Kenneth Ingram, Editor of the Catholic Review, the "Green Quarterly"; Professor Mac Murray of the University of London; Miss Monica Whatley, a Roman Catholic lady, and Mr. R. Davies, a Protestant inhabitant of London and a journalist.

Father Fradell spoke in scathing

terms of the lies and fabrications of the Rebels and their allies, the priests and others. He said that most of the churches were burnt by the Rebels themselves and thousands of loyal priests and Catholics and hundreds of nuns have been shot by them. That the Government was not engaged in this kind of work and was not hostile, as has been alleged, to Catholics. On the contrary, the Catholics were mostly on the side of the Government. Mr. Kenneth Ingram spoke in identical terms and said that the propaganda in favour of the Rebels was responsible for all the lies and misrepresentations that have been published abroad against the Spanish Government. All of them, including the Dean of Canterbury, promised that they would make the truth known in England.

GOD & CO.

(Translated from "L'en Dehors")

BY

R. D. KARVE

The world exists, incomprehensibly. In it, an adventure arises: Life. Out of this, emerges another: Man, with his intelligence.

In their ignorance, their astonishment, their fear, their anguish, some members of the species, in its infancy, invented an explanation of the world and of man: the phantom "God" is born in the human brain.

Later on, some people find out that this explanation is an error, but their cunning enables them to see all the advantages they can get out of this illusion and they convert it into a lie. It is this childish error, converted into a cunning lie, which reigns over humanity, which is being crushed by its weight.

As for those, infinitesimal in number, who, having made the same discovery, want to proclaim it so that truth as shown by science should be supreme,

their voice is smothered, both by the mystifiers and the mystified. Those are evidently "enemies of the people"

Their is a great analogy between the idea of God and the drawing of lots. The arbitrary and blind action which, in the eyes of those who admit his existence, seems to emanate from Him, reminds us inevitably of the operation of drawing lots, which itself appears to be a miniature of the most brutal determinism of nature. The same results, devoid of intelligence and justice, in the three cases, which are really speaking only two, or rather one, that of determinism.

Suppose then that I start deifying this drawing of lots and imploring this new mystic bubble: "O Drawing of Lots that art in Heaven, Thou whom I adore, I pray Thee humbly, make me win the million at the National Lottery", will I not be acting like an idiot, fit for the lunatic asylum? And yet this is what the

believer does every day, the believer so much esteemed by the intellectual bourgeois and considered the foundation of civilisation—one can see that from the way the world is going!

In order to create a profitable confusion and at the same time to get simpletons to take them seriously if possible, Catholic theologians are trying to annex the scientific vocabulary. Two prominent ones have recently written: "The idea and the word 'mystic' denote essentially the experimental knowledge of the hidden God." This abuse of the word 'experimental' is sheer prevarication.

You can try if you like to reproduce in your brain the vision of some religious neurasthenic from a lunatic asylum. This attempt, if successful, may be called an experiment, but if you announce your intention to the doctor in charge, he will put you into the same category as the patient, and he will not be far wrong. Another example of the imposture of these two authors, who not only try to give a scientific appearance to mysticism, but also want to call it rational: speaking of the mysticism of a saint, they say "If, like Descartes we define good sense as 'the power to distinguish the true from the false', we can call it the mysticism of good sense." This is juggling with words in order to make us take for truth and reason what is exactly the contrary.

There is only one thing which can bind men together, to bind them as they should be bound, in all liberty of conscience, and that thing is not religion, but science. Science is capable of doing this, because science is a register of truth and gives men a criterium of biological truth, to which, if one wants to live, one must adapt oneself, taking into account any synthesis that may be eventually necessary.

Religion, being based on an error and a lie, having therefore no basis which can entail the free and deliberate agree-

ment of men, may be able to chain slaves who adopt beliefs without examination, but as man progresses, he is less inclined to bear chains, and besides, we do not wish to bind slaves by any means, but to gain the intellectual adherence of free men.

It is therefore useless, not to say absurd, to talk of any agreement of science and religion: these two terms are contradictory. Contrary to its etymology, religion really means division. Division is the only thing that in fact religion is apt to produce.

Boileau, in one of his Satires written in 1705, said: "What was Socrates after all, on careful examination, but a man like others, determined to evil?", meaning "determinism" in a scientific sense. He sent the satire to a cardinal to see if there was anything offensive to Jesuits in the poem, and the latter made him change the above into "practising evil of his own free will". A significant transformation: man cannot be determined towards good or evil, according to the Church, but is, by his free will, free to choose the nature of his acts. Boileau was not a scientist and did not know what to think on these matters, but the cardinal knew very well, not perhaps what people ought to think, but certainly what they ought to believe, or at least pretend to believe!

"Nothing happens on earth without a reason, without design and without the order of your Providence," says 'Imitation' (Book III, Chap. L,4). If a Design presides over terrestrial destinies, how can man have a free will, which will necessarily enable him to go against this Design? On the other hand, the idea that man has a free will which is comprised in the design, is a negation of free will, since any decision will be determined by the design. It is a theologico-metaphysical muddle!

"Vanity of vanities, all is vanity", God included.

WHAT IS HINDU ORTHODOXY?

BY

R. D. KARVE

Even the people who are continually complaining that good old orthodox Hinduism is being undermined by Western education will be hard put to it to explain just what this Hinduism exactly is. If one considers the different arguments advanced by orthodox writers on different occasions, one finds that they are fond of designating it by the name "Arya-Sanscriti" (Aryan culture). But if one tries to go deeper into it, one finds that though orthodox people pretend to follow the teachings of the ancients, what they are really concerned about is the defence of current custom rather than anything else. Besides if one tries to see what the teaching of the ancients was, how far back is one to go? Orthodox people get out of this difficulty simply by stopping at some point which seems to support current custom. This is no doubt very convenient, but hardly very honest. If any importance is to be given to ancient custom, does it not follow that the older it is, the better? Of course this is perfectly absurd, because if we accept the evolution theory, it might lead us to the usages of ape-like ancestors. But orthodoxy need not be afraid of that, since they assume that the world started with the creation of a few Rishis, that these ancient sages knew intuitively what was right and what was wrong, and that mankind has been deteriorating ever since. On this basis, one can certainly argue that the more ancient practices must be more moral than later ones. But this does not suit orthodox writers at all, because in ancient times, Hindus not only ate the flesh of that most sacred animal, the cow, but there are even references to human sacrifices in Sanscrit literature. These were naturally given up later on and the cow-totem was adopted from the Jains, though Hindus now pretend that it is their own. Rationalization is attempted on the ground of the cow being a useful animal and important because of

its milk. But Hindus do not revere the buffalo, though it gives milk too, nor the horse or the dog, though they are useful animals. In fact Hindus consider the dog unclean, though if one considers the habits of the cow, it is certainly not much cleaner.

Orthodoxy found a trick to get out of such difficulties by declaring that certain things which were permitted in ancient times are prohibited in the 'Kali-Yuga', as the present age is called. In the first place, this fantastic division of the whole of eternity into sets of four Yugas: Krita, Treta, Dwapara and Kali, starting with the first again when the set is finished, is itself comparatively recent, being at least later than the Rig-Veda. In the first of these four Yugas, people are supposed to have been very righteous and religious, but through these Yugas, they went on deteriorating until they became very bad indeed in the present "Kali-Yuga". This was really a great invention, very useful to orthodox defenders of custom. Mr. P. V. Kane, the well-known Sanscrit scholar, in a paper published in the September 1936 issue of the Journal of the B. B. Royal Asiatic Society, remarks about this invention that "This theory of four Yugas provided a formidable weapon to writers on Dharma when inconvenient texts had to be explained away. Many of our authorities have one verse in common, viz. "the religious ordinances are different in the Krita age and in Treta and Dwapara also; in the Kali age different ordinances apply to men to suit the decadence of dharma in each age". Any practices that shocked the feelings of later writers were declared to be forbidden in the present age and were consigned to remote ages. Very amusing results follow from this. Parasara claims that his Smṛti contains the ordinances peculiar to the Kali age. Parasara lessened the periods of impurity due to

death or birth according as a man was learned in the Vedas or otherwise; he allowed a woman to remarry in case of five calamities viz. when the husband was missing, or dead, or had become an ascetic, was impotent, or guilty of a 'mahapataka' (major sin); he allows even Brahmanas to take cooked food from dasas (slaves), cowherds, barbers, etc. But it will be noticed from the extracts given later on that these practices are condemned by later writers as forbidden in the Kali age."

This is why the British government had to pass a special act to allow Hindu widows to remarry even when the husband was dead, though Parasara was much more liberal. As for taking cooked food from lower castes, Brahmins are still unwilling to do it. The result of this confusion is that it is very easy to pick out a text from some authority to defend current custom and to ignore anything that opponents may quote against that custom. Mr. Kane's paper throws a flood-light on ancient Hindu practices, mentioned in order to condemn them in the Kali age, things extremely damning to "Arya-Sanscriti" (Aryan culture) if there is any such thing. For instance if a man died childless, his widow had the right to get his elder brother to produce a child from her. This custom was called "Niyoga" and was not considered adultery. But there is a worse case in the Mahabharata, where Pandu, who was unable to have children (he is not described as impotent, but is under a curse that he will die if he touches his wife with amorous intent) persuades his wife to invoke the assistance of different gods, who produce in turn the five heroes of the epic, who are called after their nominal father "Pandavas". A similar practice is mentioned in the Bible. This is of course unthinkable in the Kali age, as orthodox people will gravely explain, though it was quite all right then. Flesh and wine were offered to guests at the "Shraddha" ceremony, but this is also prohibited in this age. Different kinds of sons, who would be considered illegitimate now, were considered legiti-

mate in ancient times, for instance a son of an unmarried mother.

Other practices that were legitimate formerly and not so now are mentioned by Mr. Kane and they make very interesting reading. For instance Brahmins could marry a girl of any lower caste, but not the other way round. If a Brahmin became a desperado, he could be killed without any sin, but in the Kali age, a Brahmin is too sacred to be killed on any account. Of course this does not apply to the British Government, who may sentence a Brahmin to death, though they pretend not to interfere with religion. Formerly a Brahmin could be purified of the sin of a sea-voyage by submitting to a Prayaschitta ceremony, but apparently even that cannot purify him now. Even then, Pandit Malaviya himself is willing to risk his orthodoxy by undertaking a sea voyage. What a fall!

A very curious practice of ancient times is also mentioned. This was a method of suicide for people who thought they had nothing more to do in this world. They just started walking for the Great Journey "till the body falls, by falling from a precipice or by entering the Ganges at a holy place like Prayaga or by entering fire." There are instances of several kings having done this. This practice was followed by an old man in one of Mr. K. M. Munshi's films, when disappointed with the doings of the younger generation, not knowing apparently that it was not permissible in the Kali age.

Among other practices now prohibited, were the killing of a cow for sacrifice, partaking of wine in a sacrifice, adjusting the periods of supposed impurity after a death or a birth according to Vedic learning (a flat ten-day rule being prescribed in the Kali age). Formerly one could expiate even mortal sins by undergoing a secret 'prayaschitta' (penance) but this cannot be done in the Kali age for 'Brahmahatya' (killing a Brahmin), drinking wine or incest. Formerly animal flesh was offered to honoured guests, among whom the bridegroom was includ-

ed, and also to dead ancestors. In fact this was compulsory, but now it is prohibited.

A purification ceremony was prescribed for women who had been raped, but now they cannot be purified at all. Sudras (the lowest class) could cook for all the higher castes, but now they cannot. "Brahmacharya" (continence) for long periods is also prohibited in the Kali age.

As Mr. Kane remarks, these special prohibitions are merely a cloak to give a religious significance to the opinions of the writers. Probably the practices condemned had already disappeared and current practices were thus given a religious background. In most cases, the older practices seem to be much saner and absolutely no reasons are given as to why they should be prohibited, even if it is taken for granted that people have de-

generated. Why should not even degenerate people try to imitate their ancestors if they are supposed to have been much better people?

The obvious answer is that one cannot expect religious people to argue logically, and the fact remains that no one is at present able to define a Hindu. A Hindu may do anything or profess any opinions and still he remains a Hindu, unless he goes through some ceremony of conversion to another religion. This is why Dr. Ambedkar and his followers threatened to be converted to some convenient religion, since there was no other way of getting rid of their disabilities as Hindus. It is up to Rationalists to find a legally recognized method of giving up one's religion without taking up any other. Many people are handicapped by religion and they have no other way of doing this.

THE NEXT STAGE OF THE INDIAN MOVEMENT

BY

M. V. V. K. RANGACHARI

The progressive element in the country has expressed itself strongly against political re-action. The duty of enlarging and adapting democratic institutions to the changing conditions of the time is no less insistent in this country than in the West. In a recent Conway Discussion Circle (see Literary Guide, London, March 1937, p.62) Mr. David Keir analysed the problems confronting democracy. The spread of the cult of the uniformed man, the Red or the Black International, Communist or Fascist, was also the cult of the uninformed, as evidenced by the suppression of the Press and individual judgment by dictatorial action. The Fascist menace led to the concentration on the defence of existing democratic institutions; the furtherance of the economic liberty of the masses even in countries like England is not as much as attempted since democracy has now to stand still, thankful for the substantial

measure of political liberty already gained for the common man, yet suspicious of every effort towards greater advance. The success of the Conservative party in England is the proof of this suspicion, while the Left Wing parties were split into warring elements. Mr. Keir pleaded in favour of the progressive parties joining in a Popular Front with an agreed programme 'instead of striving to find points of disagreement'.

The menace of dictatorial action is an all round problem entering into every field of human endeavour in many insidious ways. In our country, the cry is raised in the name of orthodox religion, that the success of political progressivism should leave the traditional forms of belief and custom untouched. Among the political progressivists themselves, there are those who advocate office-acceptance which the Congress Left-Wing does not

approve of. Reform is pitched against revolution, and the formulation of a scheme for collective adaptation is a very difficult task. The Hindu-Moslem communal adjustment is a persistent trying factor. The narrow line marking off strong leadership from dictatorship may vanish any day. It is not impossible that here as elsewhere, the rod of the dictator should prove the ultimate sanction. Liberty in any case stands on trial, whether it is the religionist who cries danger to his pet allegiances, or whether the cry came from those whose effort in the cause of human advance is met by the force of suppression as of the Press in the Fascist countries. Both ways it is the attempt to have a stranglehold of the one against another.

It is impossible in the complex times of the present world, that any inspiration for political or economic advance should come from one port to another. Each country has its own trying conditions, its problems of unemployment, poverty and distress. The ordering of the resources rests on the people of each country for themselves, and however much the shackles imposed from without may grate,

it should ultimately lie in the reasonableness of the method devised for throwing them out, whether the attempt will prove successful or not. To be able to perceive that the mainspring of human action rivets itself to economic self-sufficiency, and that it rested on human intellect to order the household in a manner satisfactory to the mass of mankind is the beginning of faith in progress, and the evolution of order out of the existing conditions of conflict and forceful dictation. To know that the fancies and faiths of the past had their useful turns of service is the homage that should be paid to history both on the religious and on the secular side. But if India would implement the congress successes in the recent elections, it may only be on the lines of forming Popular Fronts based on reasonable concessions to opposing view-points with an avowed purpose of enlarging and adapting, in the words of Mr. Keir, to the ever-changing conditions, our democratic institutions instead of merely concentrating on the defence of existing orders in religion, politics, and economics. In India, as anywhere else, the cry should go forth for greater reason, not for a greater measure of its abdication.

PREMONITORY DREAMS

To

The Editor of the Reason,
Bombay.

Dear Sir,

Kindly publish the above in the journal, with a view to elicit any information on the subject from the scientific point of view.

Yours truly,
M. V. V. K. Rangachari.

Without flirting with idealistic Physics that would reduce the universe into the formula of a mathematical mist-mind it is permissible to reflect upon the phenomena of dreams that have exercised the Vedanta philosophy of Sankara and other oriental introspectionists. It would be impossible to found a theory of dis-

carnate intelligence surviving a biological organism merely upon the basis of dreams experienced during life, which somehow translated themselves in rare instances into actualities. But rationalism should accept verified facts, whatever the explanations sought to be offered. With a view to elicit further light in the direction, a few instances about whose veracity or bona-fides no comment may be made are here recorded:—

(i) A close relation of a lady who was to have died in a day or two had a dream in which she complained that she was wading through long darkness. The deceased and her relation were at the time in different districts, and the dreamer had no cause to believe that she would be

losing her so soon. Yet the indication turned out true in less than 48 hours, and the verification was made soon after the event of death that it was very surprisingly fulfilled.

(ii) A poor old villager who secured his savings of life in a few promissory notes and bonds and some small currency went to another village fifty miles away for a few days' absence. During this short stay-out, he dreamt that his belongings were taken away through the fraudulent inducement of one of his family members. Within ten hours of the dream, during which he got wildly perturbed, that particular member of the family ran to him complaining how she had been betrayed into handing over the papers to the enemy. Notification in the local press and criminal prosecution, and even civil litigation did not make good his loss, which was for his status a catastrophe.

(iii) A brother-in-law of a murdered man living several miles away dreamt that violence was committed against him. He reached the residence of the deceased to find that he had gone out on a long journey, and that his wife (i.e., his own sister) had misgivings about his return. Subsequent events disclosed that the mutilated body was left concealed in a trunk hundreds of miles away. His dream was a few days before the discovery.

(iv) Fifteen hours before the death of a baby (eight months old) her mother had a vision that somebody passed away from the child into the open courtyard and vanished henceforth.

The authenticity of the experiences may be accepted as substantially true. They have come within observation in less than any period during which memory survived and is vivid. If it is possible that even a single case of premonitory dream came out to be true, what is the kind of explanation to be attempted, and how far any further theories regarding spiritual realities may rationally be pushed forward?

Cocanada, 17-5-1937.

(The very conception of a premonitory dream seems to be fundamentally

wrong, unless of course one assumes the existence of a God who takes so much interest in an individual as to send him a dream to warn him of something going to happen. In all the instances given, supposing them to be verifiable, the warning seems to have served no purpose either. What sense can there be in warnings like this? If one does not assume such a God, whose existence is patently absurd to every rationalist, a premonitory dream becomes an absurdity, since it would mean that something which is going to happen produces an effect beforehand, which is reversing the usual order of cause and effect. It is a popular notion embodied in the phrase: "Coming events cast their shadows before", but that does not make it less absurd. In the first case mentioned, there is obviously no reason to interpret the dream in any particular way, and the interpretation must have come after the death of the relative. Other cases have to be considered coincidences, and every one must have experience of very strange coincidences indeed, where no dreams are involved. There is nothing extraordinary in dreams of relatives dying or money being stolen, and sometimes these come true.—Editor "Reason").

FORM OF BEQUEST TO THE R.A.I.

Readers of Reason who are in sympathy with the objects of the Rationalist Association of India are invited to remember the organization when making their Wills. Appended is a form of bequest which may be useful to friends who are desirous of allocating a part of their estate to assist in the dissemination of rational views on religion and cognate subjects:—

"I GIVE to the Rationalist Association of India whose offices are at 5-12, Queens Road, Bombay, the sum of Rs. (here insert amount) to be applied to the general purposes of the said Association; and the receipt of one of the joint secretaries for the time being shall be sufficient discharge to my Executors for such legacy."

HOLY WAR

(*Reproduced from the Freethinker*)

by Chapman Cohen

All war is brutalizing and tends to degradation. Even when war is "necessary" that truth remains; for war means a settlement of human differences in terms of struggle on the animal level, and it demoralizes the more speedily as it quickly accomplishes its aim. It accustoms men to a quick method of establishing one's will, and so makes the use of brute force attractive to the least thoughtful. Ruskin tried to discriminate between the modern mechanical and chemical war and earlier forms of conflict, on the ground that when men fought hand to hand it encouraged keenness of eye, strength of hand and a well kept body. Even so we are still on a level little higher than that of the animal. We have only reached the level of the Major-General, who, fronting a body of men all dressed alike, shaved alike, standing immovable as images, and exhibiting man in his least man-like attitude, receives the praise of "a fine body of men, sir." Human society, a desirable human society is not made up of this type. It does not rise to greater heights because of mere animal fitness, but because the higher social qualities, intelligence, desirable emotional reactions and the like—assume an increasing dominance. Physical warfare cannot be divested of its brutalizing character. It can only be rationalized; it is gangsterism on a national scale, and it is significant that in the worst of wars religion has been used as a defence mechanism against the impact of more civilized feelings and protests.

Religion and War

But beastly as all wars are, there are none so bad as those which have been openly waged in the name of religion. And when the revolution broke out in Spain, the Roman Church left no doubt

in the minds of the impartial that this was another "Holy War." Lurid tales of the raping of nuns, of the massacre of priests, of the closing of Churches, and of the disinterring of the dead bodies of priests, illustrated the mental activity of rogues, and were read eagerly by fools. But it was well established that the Church was behind the revolt, that many of the churches were used as ammunition stores, and that priests took part in the fighting. The Pope gave his sanction to this new "Holy War". Ex-King Alfonso, rapacious, dishonest and unscrupulous, told a representative of the Evening Standard, that every members of the "left", that is, all who supported the Government, would have to be exterminated. The indecent, but very pious General de Llano broadcasted his determination to mix the blood of the defenders of Madrid with the cement used to rebuild the Churches—often destroyed by his own guns. General Franco gave his Moors a free hand to rape and rob, and took no prisoners. It was the Church's cry in the Albigensian War—"Kill all, God will know his own" over again. It really is a "Holy War".

The Church had behind it its own precedents. The Spanish conflict followed in its nature the lines marked out by other wars of the Church. When the soldiers of the Holy Crusades entered Jerusalem, Mills, in his History of the Crusades, says, "the subjugated people were dragged into the public places and slain. Women with children at their breasts, girls and boys, all were slaughtered. The squares, the streets, and even the uninhabited places of Jerusalem, again were strewn with the dead bodies of men and women and the mangled limbs of children."

The Pope and his followers found the right phrase when they called the

Spanish Civil War a "Holy War". No more fitting description could be found. And he and his devoted generals could have found full authority in the Bible for what they did. For God told his favourite people "When the Lord thy God hath delivered it (a city) into thine hands thou shalt smite every male thereof with the edge of the sword. But the women and

the little ones and all that is in the city Of the cities of these people which the Lord thy God doth give thee for an inheritance, thou shalt save nothing that breatheth." Generals de Llano and Franco merely translated the Bible into a broadcast talk in Spanish. The Lord was with them; the Pope was with them. It was a "Holy War".

SOCIAL EVOLUTION & ISLAM

Synopsis of an Address delivered at the Birthday Celebration of Prophet Mahomed held on 21st May, 1937, at the Town Hall, Cocanada.

BY

M. V. V. K. RANGACHARI

"O you who believe! fulfil the obligations." (The Quran, Al-Maidah, VI, 5,i,1) is a cry in historic sequence against the Jewish and Christian violations of the covenants." They (the Christians) neglected a portion of what they were reminded of: therefore We excited enmity and hatred among them" (ibid, iii,15). The prophecy has proved true right up to our time of the Great German, the Ethiopian and the Spanish Wars. Evil is followed with evil consequences, and the advent of Moses or Jesus did not prevent the working of the law. If the claim to be the sons of God and His beloved ones be true, Mohomet asked: "why does He then chastise you for your faults?" (ibid iii, 18). At the same time the mystic Trinitarian theology of Father, Son and the Holy Ghost was set at naught by the express denial that Jesus was not to be taken to have been immortal (Messiah iii, 17). The reclamation of theology to the pristine purity of its monotheistic level was the handiwork of the prophet who despite his supposed trance-like mystic experiences preserved the integrity of the intellect above the confusion of humanity with divinity itself. This bold departure from the existing trend of human belief marks the close parallel bet-

ween the Quran and the Gita which agree significantly on the point.

By the side of the assertion in the Quran (VI, 5, iii, 17) 'They certainly disbelieve who say: God—He is the Messiah, son of Mary' the reference in the Gita:

Avyaktam vyaktimapanam, manante mam abudhayah,

Parambhavam ajananto mamavyayamanuttamam. (VII, 24).

(They are ignorant people who think that I incarnate in flesh, as being unmanifest, and perfect, I am above diminution in birth) is close parallel. Starting from that level-headed realistic position, akin to the Dwaita philosophy, the Prophet worked out a scheme of social unity and collective effort which, but for the historic accidents of various countries, would in all probability have helped to harmonise life more than any other force.

For, be it remembered that the Quran takes full cognisance of the prior scriptures "for every one of you did We appoint a law and a way" (vii, 48), and the ambition to have "made you a single people" was already there. Perhaps the Mosaic law about the eye for an eye,

and the tooth for a tooth had begun to undergo a humanistic interpretation.

Marjolatry along with all forms of idolatry was the target of Mahomet's teaching. "O Jesus, didst thou say to men, Take me and my mother for two Gods besides God"? He said 'Glory be to Thee, it did not befit me that I should say what I had no right to (VI, 5, xvi, 116). It was an age when Thracian and other women were in the habit of worshipping the virgin as a goddess, the offer of cakes being the feature of such worship. The Roman Church down to our time looks upon the Virgin Mary as the mother of God, the second Eve, very specially our advocate before God for pity, and that her images are of utmost utility. The comparison with Lakshmi who is supposed to intercede on behalf of the suffering humanity is not out of place.

To clear the human mind from the cobwebs of mysticism and superstition, prophets with clearer vision have time and again appeared on the scene. (Dharmasamsthapanarthaya sambhavami yuge, yuge, Gita, IV, 8). The miracle age of healing the sick, giving sight to the blind, and restoring the dead to life has passed. The economic dependency involved in the prayer "give us the daily bread" is also to be replaced by the masculine teaching of effort and human achievement. We thus trace between Judaism, Christianity and Islam the march of life, religious, social as well as economic in evolutionary cadence.

With the stringent application of logical monotheism, a stern regard for unswerving uprightness is a necessary corollary of Islamic life. No Muslim can think in terms of conflicting philosophy where equivocation has any place. It may be put down as his handicap, that he cannot comprehend the opposites in one swoop. He is a very poor diplomat, broadly speaking, of course. He can only think of straight lines. A little twist or curve is enough to upset him. Much as the commandments refer to the concrete

things of everyday life, he has to be told at every turn what he should do or avoid doing. The prophet with the psychological foresight expected of his position, has provided guidance and instruction on all counts. And the command "let not hatred of a people—because they hindered you from the sacred Mosque—incite you to exceed the limits, and help one another in goodness and piety, and do not help one another in sin and aggression," is worthy of international acceptance. The consciousness of legal rights, and assertion thereof by aggressive action should have remained farther from Muslim life in India or elsewhere but for the influx of light from sources other than the Quran, and jurisprudence of other than Islamic origin. Maulana Mahommed Ali, M.A., LL.B., states in his translation of the Quran (note on p. 109) that the principle laid down in it as to uprightness in conduct in dealing even with those whom we hate is one which is not met with anywhere else, and that the international law of Modern Europe stands sorely in need of such a principle of uprightness. But the counsel of perfection can have no hold on nations that are driven by competition, and greed, obsessed with distrust and fear, polluted by chicanery, fraud, exploitation, and wholesale massacre. The equal treatment for all nations is merely a dream of Islamic vision, of no greater promise than the hope of any other teacher in the past.

But the main point of Islamic sociology centres round the prophet's teaching regarding marriage outside the group of his following. The Jewish Law prohibited marriage with non-Jews. "Neither shalt thou make marriages with them: thy daughter thou shalt not give unto his son, nor his daughter shalt thou take unto thy son" is the dictate of Deuteronomy VII, 3.

Paul followed the Jewish law. "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers, for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?" (II Corinthians, vi, 14). This exclusivism

is relaxed by the Prophet. "And the chaste from among the believing women and the chaste from among those who have been given the Book before you (you may take) when you have given them their dowries, taking (them) in marriage. . . ." (Al-Maidah: the Food, Part VI, Ch. 8, Section i, verse 5). The latitude of social perspective is obvious.

In the very attitude to the other sex, there has come over in Islam a healthy balance beyond what Christ is reported to have uttered before his relations. While the Christian teaching has the ring of ascetic seclusion, the attitude of Mahomet to sex is more human. The equality of benefit to male and female is stressed in several places in the Quran. (cf. iii, 194, iv, 124, xvi, 97, xl, 40). "There is no difference between men and women, and morally and spiritually they can rise to the same eminence" (Mahomed Ali's English Translation, introduction p. cxiii).

One point is urged against Islamic sociology, viz. polygamy. But the requirements of the warring period called forth protection to the widow and the orphan, and where manhood died in battle, a marital adjustment by permitting plurality of wives may have been not only proper, but highly necessary. If in the actual working out of the institution, it proved baneful to any extent, owing to

freezing communal practice, it is the common fate of all human efforts that after centuries of usefulness carry their own weakness demanding some kind of revision and new adjustment. The equality of sexual opportunities is perhaps one of these, that require fresh handling by human genius in our times, but that is no particular demand of Islamic society. The failure of western marriage systems and the constant changes sought to be introduced in Christendom since the Roman Church ordained that "whom God hath united let no human hand cut asunder" and the persistent cry towards liberalising the divorce laws point to the existence of a wider field of reform in the relations between the sexes under any historical faith. But the credit of visualising the human side of social life should go to the holy Prophet, no less than the capacity to rescue human Faith from the mysticism of Trinitarian Theology was avowedly His peculiar possession. He prohibited the making of likenesses of any living thing following strictly the Jewish and Christian commandment in that regard. "La illaha il Allah" (There is no God but God) is a powerful saying, and whether Mohamet realised Divine Supremacy in another world or not, his contribution to the social advance of life on the planet should be admitted to have been very considerable.

Cocanada, 23-5-1936.

REASON

The Journal of The Rationalist
Association of India.
5-12, Queen's Road,
Bombay.

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*All contributions should be addressed to the
Editor "REASON" Jagjivan Mansions, 13, New
Bhatwadi, Bombay 4, and should reach the editor on
or before the 15th of each month.*

*The writers of the articles in this journal are
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AT THE SECRETARIES' TABLE

Nearly every organization has its social side and it is an unhappy fact that, due to the poor financial state of our Association, there is no opportunity for Rationalists and their friends to meet in congenial atmosphere and consequently they hardly know each other.

It is hoped to remedy this by frequently holding lunches, informal evening parties and socials.

It is proposed to have a lunch on Sunday 25th July, and we hope members

will co-operate in making it a success. The time and place will be announced in the next issue of Reason. There will be no other announcement except in Reason and some local newspapers. Members are requested to let us know as early as possible whether they will attend and the number of guests who will accompany them.

There will be a little entertainment if possible.

We make this announcement early so that members may make a note of the date and make it a point to attend.

We also welcome those readers of our journal who are interested and wish to attend.

* * *

Just as we are going to press, news of the nasty riots fills our minds with disgust. Here is evidence once again for the necessity on the part of all rationalists to rise in united action to stem the tide of irrationalism and bigotry which is sweeping the country.

* * *

We desire to open a page in "Reason" for "Letters from our Readers" on topical and controversial subjects. We shall also allow short signed articles on subjects of interest to rationalists.

Abraham Solomon,

Jt. Hony. Secretary, R.A.I.

OBITUARY

Mr. J. J. Jhirad

We announce with deep regret the death of Mr. Jacob J. Jhirad who, after a very short illness passed away peacefully on Friday, the 26th of May, 1937, at the age of 74.

He took keen interest in the activities of the Association and was also a member of the Rationalist Press Association of London.

He became a rationalist in the latter part of his life and remained staunch to the end.

We offer our sincere sympathies to his bereaved family.



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REASON

THE JOURNAL OF THE RATIONALIST ASSOCIATION OF INDIA

"TO COMBAT ALL RELIGIOUS AND SOCIAL BELIEFS AND CUSTOMS THAT CANNOT STAND THE TEST OF REASON AND TO ENDEAVOUR TO CREATE A SCIENTIFIC AND TOLERANT MENTALITY AMONG THE PEOPLE OF THIS COUNTRY." *"Objects of the Rationalist Association of India."*

New Series.

JULY 1937

No. 6.

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THE SPIRIT INDUSTRY

BY

R. D. KARVE

I am not here referring to the manufacture of alcohol, but to the business of manufacturing spirits of the dead to order, as per sample provided by their living relatives. In most cases, it is the will to believe that leaves some people helpless in the hands of unscrupulous crooks, who are not even clever jugglers and require the help of darkness to produce their tricks. Sceptics being carefully excluded from their performances, they are sure of success every time, and if by chance some unbeliever manages to slip in and expose the trick by switching on the lights or lighting an electric torch, they have always the excuse that spirits sometimes deceive. Even if the audience clearly sees some crude contrivance obviously intended to cheat them, most of

they are so firmly determined to believe, that they declare that the contrivance itself was created by spirits in order to communicate with them. Somebody has said that human stupidity gives us a good idea of infinity. This is well illustrated by spirits seances, where the uttermost drivel passes as profound revelations from the spirit world. Not that the members of the audience are all idiots. Far from it. Some of the most distinguished people in the world have been gulled into a belief in the genuineness of spiritist phenomena. The only genuine phenomenon produced is the muddling of their brains. Sir Oliver Lodge, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, Flammarion, the well-known French astronomer, and Victor Hugo, have all been cheated in

this way, and even spirits of persons who have never lived except in novels have been successfully produced by ignorant mediums. Apparently even the lower animals share the privilege of life after death and the spirit of the lion in the story of Androcles has been successfully invoked. Unfortunately these names provide an argument for spiritist beliefs, which slipshod thinkers accept as sufficient. People find it difficult to understand how a famous scientist like Sir Oliver Lodge can believe something which is not true. Even Sir Oliver Lodge however has not said that life after death is scientifically proved. His belief in it is merely the result of a loss of mental equilibrium produced by his intense desire to communicate with his dead son, which led to his believing mediums who had been proved to be fraudulent.

Some such gullibles have founded in France an 'International League for Moral Reform by Means of Truth.' In their trimestrial report, they try to make people believe that some houses are really haunted. Commenting on this, a writer in a French Journal says: "I know very well that there are old women who will tell you without flinching that they have seen the Devil. They might be excused on the ground that they are illiterate, but that educated people should still feel the need of believing in the supernatural passes my understanding. And it is not only some correspondents of the League who have said this, it is the Committee itself which professes faith in this chimera and advances arguments in its favour. Replying to some one who denied the reality of haunted houses, a correspondent writes: 'Let him read Flammarion on this subject. He is an impartial author whom nobody can doubt.' I do not find this in Flammarion's writings, but supposing he did say so, what does it prove? Simply that Flammarion's work consists of two dis-

ting parts, of which one is admirable from the scientific point of view, but the other is mere fiction, being utterly baseless."

Whenever people with a scientific mind have tried to probe into so-called facts in favour of the supernatural, nothing remains of these facts. When however a writer proves that fraud has been practised in so-called demonstrations of thought-reading, reading at a distance, levitation, etc., the League pretends that the book has no scientific value, because it is written 'in a spirit of negation' and is merely an enumeration of frauds. Some people have been successfully warned by these exposures, but naturally you cannot warn those who are wilfully blind.

Those who still believe in spirits maintain that they take all necessary precautions to prevent fraud in their experiments. These statements cannot be taken on trust, because people often do not know what precautions should be taken. If at all any phenomena are produced in spite of all precautions, such as table-turning, they can only be due to the action of natural laws, and the proof is that they can only be produced under certain definite conditions.

Some persons pretend to possess the power of clairvoyance. They have however never been able to demonstrate it practically except to such as will let themselves be easily cheated. When laws against sorcery were in force, some persons were burnt alive for that crime after a complete confession, but that does not mean that they could do anything like it. They merely confessed in order to avoid further torture. There are some backward persons to-day who believe in ghosts and haunted houses. It is a survival of savage superstitions unworthy of an enlightened age.

CORONATION

(Reproduced from Free Thinker).

by Chapman Cohen

God Save the King.

Many people are under the impression that the Coronation ceremony at Westminster Abbey is an essential part of the function of creating a King of Great Britain. This is altogether wrong. Whatever the character of the King or the wisdom of hereditary succession, the new King is there the moment the old King dies, or abdicates, and functions fully so soon as he has taken the accession oath as prescribed by law. The people living have nothing to do with it, Parliament—until it passes a law altering the method of creating a King—has nothing to do with it. One King automatically follows another. Edward VIII was King the moment George V. died. George VI. became King the moment Edward VIII. abdicated. He was not even King by "the grace of God"—that comes later, at Westminster Abbey. The throne is never vacant; the country is never without a King; and when the accession oath is taken, the installation of the new King is complete. Nothing is added to the **earthly** and **human** character of the King by the Coronation Service. What the Coronation Service does is an altogether distinct thing. If it never occurred George VI. would be no less King of England than he is to-day. It is necessary to bear this consideration in mind, properly to understand what follows.

But I must point out that while the King in his secular aspect is an elected King, he is not elected by the people of to-day. The wisdom of our ancestors in 1688 determined who should be King in 1937, as well as who should reign before and after that date. The people living at any time after 1688, as Edmund Burke explained, have nothing whatever to do with it—the King is King, "in contempt of their choice." This relieving of the people of the power to choose a King, when one looks at the character, mental and moral, of many of our Kings

since the Act of Settlement, certainly clears them of a heavy responsibility. But in the opinion of our ancestors of 1688 the office of the King was too important for contemporary peoples to decide who should fill it. We owe George VI., as we owed Edward VIII, and previous monarchs, to the spiritual vision of the Government of 1688, a Government that was not very remarkable for wisdom in any other direction. No Government in these degenerate days would dare to lay down rules in perpetuity for the clearing of garbage from the streets; the greater should be our admiration for the supreme wisdom of these people of 1688 for their prescience and courage in so admirably arranging for the Kings of all future times, and for the head of an Empire long before that Empire comes into existence. When we have this example of foresight before us, a foresight which on our own confession, makes us the best people in the world, with the best country in the world, the best judges in the world, and the finest Government in the world—without which we might become as are the poor French or American people—there is little grounds for anyone objecting to the marvels of Biblical prophecy.

* * *

The Coronation

We must then get completely out of our heads the idea that the Coronation Service has any essential connexion with the recognition of the King, or with the creating of the King. In the proper sense of the word he does not represent the people at all, for representation implies appointment, and the King of England is not appointed by any person or by any group of persons now living. He stands for that kind of representation which existed in the days of "pocket boroughs." The "shot" of the district decided who was to "represent" the constituency in Parliament, and it was the duty of the

people so represented to applaud the selection. The only people the King can be said to represent are those who lived in 1688. Our duty as loyal, intelligent citizens is to applaud their choice, and to admire their foresight in the unavowed assumption that the people of subsequent times could not be trusted to choose for themselves. But the performance at Westminster Abbey, with the theatrical rehearsal of all the actors, from the principals down to the horses, adds nothing whatever to the status or power of the King as head of the State.

The Coronation, as the Archbishops and Bishops have taken great pains to assure us, is a purely magical ceremony. It converts the King who is, until the Coronation, a mere man, into the voice of God, to whom the peers and people promise "earthly worship." There are certain material considerations connected with it, and which a cunning priesthood takes care are always present. But omitting the promise of the King to "preserve unto the Bishops and Clergy of England, all . . . rights and privileges," without which the Archbishop would wash his hands of the whole business, the essence of the whole performance is the repetition of the very primitive ceremony of converting the King into an incarnation of the tribal god. It is found in use to-day among primitive peoples, and the essentials of the Westminster Coronation service may actually be found in the tribal ceremonies of the Fiji Islanders.

* * *

A Royal Gallery

We are trying to understand by what method a Royal Family which, a little more than a century ago, actually stood lower than any other Royal Family has ever stood in this country, finds its recent representatives almost deified. Never did a succession of monarchs offer less promising material for this transformation than did the House of Brunswick, now the House of Windsor. From George I. to William IV. they were treated with contempt by the larger portion

of the inhabitants, and some of the brightest names in the literature and public life of their times made no secret of their feelings. The first George was unable to speak English, and was noted for his taste for elderly and ugly mistresses. No one has claimed that George II., III., IV., and William IV., stood very high in the estimation of the people. Dr. Johnson gave it as his opinion that if a vote of the country were taken the people would recall the Stuarts. And, indeed, Charles II. and William III. were the last English monarchs in this country for whom one could feel any genuine intellectual respect. The author of **Coronation Commentary**, which makes out as good a case for the Royal Family as can be done with decency, and which follows the plan of saying all that can be said against Edward VIII. with the design of exciting sympathy for his successor, says of the standing of male members of the Royal Family at the beginning of the nineteenth century:—

Their country loathed them. For their sordid and quarrelsome lives; their vices, their venality; their debts which an impoverished and over-taxed nation had to pay, and pay, and pay again; for their brutal reactionary politics. The Duke of Wellington declared that the Royal Dukes had "insulted, personally insulted two-thirds of the gentlemen of England," and that they were "the damnedest mill-stones about the neck of any Government that could be imagined." To the common people, to moderate decent men, to idealists like Godwin and Shelley, they made it nightmare plain that royalty was tyranny, oppression, beastliness.

May be the Prince of Wales had taste and charm; the Duke of York courage, the Dukes of Clarence and Kent good nature; the Duke of Cumberland, the horrible one-eyed man with the Moustaches, ability. In the eyes of the English people they were crew of thieves, bullies, scoundrels, sots and rakes.

And of George IV:—

Unlike the rest of the Hanoverians he was a coward. To his people the First Gentleman in Europe looked more like its last blackguard. On his gross person he spent literally millions of the country's money. He betrayed the liberalism he had affected. He was fat, false, bestially selfish, dissolute, drunken. He was hated savagely. The best proof of his frightful unpopularity is that he could confer a measure of popularity on so frightful a person as his wife.

Despite even George the Fourth the throne survived. . . . William Fourth inspired less hatred than his brother—he was a friendly old fool, and doted on his ten illegitimate children—but not more respected. His half-daft speeches were the terror of the Ministry and the joke of the country, while behind him loomed the shape of the ogreish Duke of Cumberland, who might well become the next King; whose accession, commented a member of the upper class, would be the occasion for suppressing the post altogether. King Billy was jeered at in public, hooted and pelted as he came back from the play.

At the beginning of Victoria's reign the outlook was not very promising for the monarchy. She was too young to have scandals connected with her name, but her mother bore none too good a character, and later the prudery of the time was angered over the fact that the Prince Consort's mother had been divorced. Victoria began her reign burdened with the character of her family, and the traditions of the last five English Kings, and it was openly said in all sorts of directions that the days of the English monarchy were numbered. One of Victoria's achievements was that of commencing as a very poor woman and ending her life as, reputably, one of the wealthiest women in Europe. Certainly the time had not arrived when the semi-deification of the King was possible. In any case the deification of a Queen was

impossible, minus a King. In the primitive form of the Coronation of a chief, it is, as we shall see, the **man** that is the first figure.

Of course the same Coronation Service was in use. Nearly every paper in the country, to say nothing of the heads of the Church, has reminded the people that the Coronation Service remains unchanged in substance, and goes back a thousand years in our history. The "thousand years" is an unusual piece of modesty on the part of the priesthood. It goes back for hundreds of thousands of years. It comes to us direct from the jungle; and but for the greater cost, the glittering diamonds and the claim to be cultured by those taking part in the ceremony, through the silk and satins of the women, and the gorgeous pantomimic dress of the King and the peers, Westminster Abbey is repeating the ceremony by which the primitive King assumed the power to send rain, to make the earth fertile, and to give his people victory in war.

(Continued on Page 124.)

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FASCISM AND SOCIAL PROGRESS

BY

[K. T. CHANDY

"How long must men and women bleed
Before humanity be freed?
How long must children suffer Pangs of
Dearth?
What do they battle all in vain
In China, India and Spain,
The sorrowful exploited of the earth?"
(Harindranath Chattopadhyaya.)

Thus asks a poet agonised at the sight of the horrible toll of human life and happiness extracted by the forces of Reaction in contemporary society. He looks around and finds the "Pompei of bourgeois civilisation" fast falling into ruins. Its economic structure, based as it is on individual's profits and anarchy in production, is being broken up by the depression and the fierce antagonism between the possessing few and the expropriated many that it has engendered. Its social organisation is weak and enervated with the poison of class divisions, the arrogance of the rich, the hunger and disease of the toiling masses and the decadence of its social values. Its politics is a tangled web of sadistic nationalism, imperialist rapacity, naked idolisation of war, ruthless repression of the civil liberties of people, broken pledges and sickening hypocrisy. Forces of reaction, entrenched behind State, Religion and Finance have united across the frontiers; their murderous onslaught on the peace freedom and progress of humanity is already filling the air with the agonised cry of their victims. Yesterday it was in China and Abyssinia, to-day it is in Spain, tomorrow it would be throughout the world. Hourly these forces seem to gain in their strength. One is constrained to ask with the poet "Do the forces of progress battle in vain?"

There can be a proper answer to this query, which so often rises in the minds of people in this age of frustration, only from a scientific study of the past. What is it that greets the eyes of a student

looking on the ages stretching from the shifting present into the hoary past? There rolls out before him a vast and enthralling panorama of the chequered progress of man from his primitive emergence out of the animal kingdom to the age of scientific conquest of nature and of unprecedented revolutionary ferment and solidarity among the toilers of the world. Somewhere at the foot of this arduous process of evolution we get the picture of a man with just the glimmerings of Reason to his support in the unequal fight against the relentless forces of Nature. As ages roll by we see him becoming less and less a sport of Nature and mastering the art of agriculture, cooking and fashioning of weapons. At every stage of his increasing control over natural forces through his developing means of production there developed a corresponding social structure with its characteristic ideological and legal systems. Each one of these civilisations, inevitable at a particular stage in the relationship between man and Nature, has given way in its turn to a higher and superior one. Primitive social systems, ancient patriarchal society, feudalism and capitalism each in its turn has risen over the debris of the proceeding one, each in its turn a higher synthesis of producing relationship, culture and freedom. True it is that none of these civilisations quitted the stage of history without the ruling class in each one of them offering a violent resistance to the forces of progress. Revolution has always been the indispensable link between a passing civilisation and a future one, though the beneficiaries of a decadent system have always tried, in times of crises, to represent that their civilisation is eternal, the final expression of human evolution. Timid hearts, in such crises, have always doubted the success of progressive forces; yet society and man have progressed, though not without backward swings. Progress is real and there cannot be any life without progressive motion. With-

in every society is embedded the forces, the conflict of which takes it from its origin to its climax and from its climax to its end in a higher form of social organisation.

What then is the direction in which the violent conflicts of contemporary society are resolving? What are the general outlines of the new society that is already visible on the horizon. A true assessment of the character of Fascism is possible only on ascertaining the general direction of social progress. The present extremely inequitable distribution of wealth, the consequent misery and enslavement of the majority of mankind and the anarchy in production must and will be replaced by a classless society based on social ownership and planned control of the means of production and distribution. Genuine social democracy based on economic and political equality, the abolition of the imperialist exploitation of peoples, the suppression of jingoistic nationalism, the creation of an effective international control of political life and the outlawry of war as a means of settling disputes between states are the general directions in which humanity will register progress in the political sphere. Universal education of a scientific character, the advance of Science and Rationalism, the development of a system of social values suited to the new international and equalitarian society are the directions in which culture would progress.

Does Fascism point in the general direction of social progress or does it stand for the organisation of social decay? The theory and practice of Fascism in the matter of world peace is by now well-known to all. The French fascist Georges Valois declares war to be the creator of every culture and civilisation. Corradini, the Italian fascist says that "War is an act of the highest solidarity of which mankind has so far shown itself to be capable." Mussolini has time and again showered eulogies on war as the highest expression of human nature. To him "Peace is absurd or

rather it is a pause in war," and war is noble for that alone in his opinion faces man with "the alternative of life and death." (Italian Encyclopaedia) Hitler and his henchmen in Germany are not a wit behind their Italian and French colleagues. To-day they have converted their benighted peoples into vast armies of destruction and their crimes against Abyssinia and Spain are too brutal and barbarous to be forgotten by civilised man. Against all canons of morality, international or private, these madmen of Europe have burned down towns and villages, bombed innocent men and women residing in open towns (Guernica Almera), consigned to flames greatest treasures of art in many of the palaces of Spain, robbed Abyssinia of her freedom and hatched the most murderous plot known in history against the people of democratic Spain. Nothing, not even the wailings of children—the victims of their poison gas and bombs—pierce the heart of these men, and to-day round their Rome—Berlin axis they are making the most thorough-going preparations for engulfing the whole of humanity in an international war. Indeed, the finger post of Fascism points in the direction of war and social reactions.

There is no greater blighting evil in contemporary society than Imperialism, with its heartless exploitation of millions of colonial masses. No humanist of repute in recent times has failed to draw the attention of mankind to the necessity of ending this scourge of humanity. Huge columns of colonial peoples are to-day on the march to regain their freedom and their freedom undoubtedly constitutes a principal factor in the struggle for World Peace. Yet we have the most ominous spectacle of Fascism trampling under feet the cherished liberty and fundamental rights of Abyssinia, China and Spain. Mussolini declares in the Italian Encyclopedia that any renunciation of imperialism is a sign of national decadence. Hitler talks of winning back Germany's lost imperial colonies and conquering fresh lands in Czechoslovakia

and East European countries. The path of social progress lies in a contrary direction.

Humanity has seen the rise and fall of many doctrines and states which sought to restrict to particular sections of the body politique the right to participate in the control of governments. In the ancient city states of Greece, slaves were denied all rights of citizenship. Plato talked of excluding all except a landed aristocracy to be rigidly trained in the military art, from the control of state policy. In the feudal ages civil and political rights were attached to land and consequently the higher ranks of the feudal hierarchy had a monopoly of State power. With the rise of new classes and the decay of feudalism, the germs of parliamentary democracy was sown and this institution has widened out to the stage when every member of a State is legally recognised as possessing the right to decide along with all his other fellow members the policy of his State. Even though in a class stratified society the ultimate springs of power are in the hands of the possessing classes, the fact remains that at least the semblance of political power had to be conceded to the non-possessing classes in times past. Thus we have a picture of an everwidening political liberty reaching out to larger and larger sections of the population. The only logical consummation of this historical process can be to make the political liberty, nominally granted under bourgeois parliamentary democracy, real and rich in contents by removing the concealed power of property owning classes and ensuring economic equity in a classless society. "Liberty without economic equality is a name of noble sound but of squalid result" says Hobson and it is in this direction of ensuring economic equality, so that individual liberty may best be secured, that social progress lies. To-day the fight is not between parliamentary democracy and dictatorship but between sham democracy or dictatorship and genuine economico-political democracy. The inefficiency of some modern democratic countries in the West is not

due to the intrinsic fault of democracy but due to the decay of capitalist economy. Fascism, being the dictatorship of the most centralised and monopolistic form of finance capitalism, considers that parliamentary democracy gives some chances to the expropriated masses to make themselves felt in the State. They conceal their real purposes and defend their brutal dictatorship on the ground that the non-possessing toilers of the world are not fit to govern as they are people who see the meaning of life only in vulgar "sensual feelings" and "the satisfaction of immediate demands." "The class by whose sweat and labour all society is fed" is slandered by the fascists as incapable of intelligence, catholicity and political consciousness. These high priests of dictatorship (Spann and Andria) say that the nation is a living organism—a divine dispensation—in which the possessing classes are the organs chosen by the Gods to perform the noble functions of deliberation and execution. The other classes are ignoble organs meant to obey the noble organs.

(To be Continued)

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CHARLES DARVIN, ATHEIST

(Translated from "*La Pensee*")

BY

R. D. KARVE

Though Charles Darwin was an atheist, he was always excusing himself for it when expounding his views on religion to his friends, as he did not quite like to be considered an atheist or a materialist. For instance, in a discussion with Gray, he says: "I never intended to express myself in an atheistic spirit, but I must confess that I do not find all round me proofs of premeditation and benevolence as clearly as other people see them and as I would like to see them myself. It seems to me that there is too much sorrow in the world."

If Darwin was prudent in his letters, he was still more so in his works published during his lifetime. He did not underline the atheistic and materialistic side of his conception of life and did not like to be called an atheist and materialist. Darwin was under the influence of the prejudices current in his bourgeois society and the false notions current about atheists in that society, which represented them in a perverted aspect. It is not therefore surprising that Darwin, obliged to respect the piety or false devotion of his countrymen, should hesitate to expose in public his real opinions on the question of religion. His evolution theory was causing him quite enough trouble already and he knew very well that to pronounce himself openly on the question of religion would bring him into conflict with public opinion, that is with the people in power.

Once Darwin was asked by letter by a German student, who questioned him on his attitude towards the principal dogmas of Christianity. Darwin asked his son to reply to the letter, but the student, not content with the vague reply given, wrote to Darwin again, who then replied, with bad grace and very briefly, beginning with these words: "I am very

busy, and old man, weak in health, and so have no time to reply at length to all your questions." However, he says later in this letter that "science has nothing to do with Christ" and adds that from his personal point of view, "there is no reason to think that there has ever been a revelation."

So the author of Darwinism never openly pointed out that his doctrine led to the negation of God. But in private conversation, he did do it sometimes. For instance, he said once to the naturalist Epling that he found himself obliged decidedly to deny Christianity because there is no data to support it. On another occasion, when Epling and Buchner, both open atheists, called on him, he asked them, "Why do you call yourselves atheists?" and when they gave him their arguments, he said he agreed with them. "I agree with you, but I should have preferred the word agnostic." On that they replied "An agnostic is a drawing room atheist, while an atheist is an aggressive agnostic." Darwin laughed and asked, "But why are you so aggressive? Is anything to be gained by trying to spread these ideas to the masses? All this is very good for educated, thinking people, but are the masses yet ready for them?"

It is a very characteristic remark, exposing the social role of religion. Darwin felt that his doctrine was absolutely atheistic, but it was clear to him at the same time that atheism was a revolutionary idea, and his class instinct suggested to him that the spread of these ideas to the masses would lead to a situation prejudicial to the thinking classes. That is why he preferred to call his conception of life agnosticism rather than atheism. He says in a letter dated 13th October 1880, "Though I am in favour

of liberty of thought on all questions, still I think (it does not matter whether I am right or wrong) that direct proofs against Christianity or theism can hardly make any impression on the public and that liberty of thought will not gain anything except by a gradual education which is the result of progress in science. That is why I have always consciously avoided writing on religion and limited myself to science. It is possible, nevertheless, that I have been unduly influenced by the

fear of causing pain to some members of my family if I attacked religion directly."

There are at present many scientists who not only refrain from attacking religion from the point of view of science, but even prostitute science by pretending to prove at the bidding of dictators that science and religion are not fundamentally opposed. But Science is not afraid either of priests or dictators.

RATIONALISM IS RELATIVE

BY

M. V. V. K. RANGACHARI

It is frequently assumed that the rationalists constitute a distinct class, a community in themselves with a particular set of doctrines or theories which they hold themselves bound to defend at all costs from outside attack. The primary allegiance to reason may involve certain very few convictions that rationalists in general agree to start with, but there is no proposition which they are prepared to accept on trust, without bringing to bear the scientific method of testing its veracity. It is here the rationalists generally come into conflict with certain beliefs and dogmas sought to be imposed on the strength of supposed authority, textual, or pontifical, scriptural or priestly, revealed through the written word or the oral command from those who are supposed to be filled with spiritual power. Even these words of God, uttered through the mouth of man or recorded in old documents do not dispense with prefixes like: "Wherefore, why, because, thus and therefore" and prove the infallible hold that reason has in the highest dictates of supernatural authority, no less than in the common concerns of everyday life. Our highest scriptures and the biggest dictators of the soul employ logic, and cannot pursue their calling for moment without utilising the ordinary canons of correct thought. As for the results, why, they

depend. Man has reasoned, from the primitive savage condition of his life right upto the topmost rungs of his civilisation and culture. He drew correct conclusions sometimes, with perhaps faulty results more often. To formulate any separatist group as being rationalist, as if men were or ever could be other than rational, would be to raise a tariff-wall based on unwarrantable presumption, within the species.

Yet, not merely those who profess to swear by human reason, but those who likewise profess to swear against it tend to build this wall of separation between the rationalist and the religionist. With the curious confusion peculiar to the credal mind, the religionist argues (mark the word, "argues") that because "reason" is not sufficient to explain some of the facts of life, because it is inadequate to fill in the entire field of human experience, therefore, it should be left behind, eschewed, or disregarded, at any rate in those higher concerns which baffle our understanding and comprehension. That it is a process of reasoning in itself is patent. The soundness of the argument is likewise obvious. The professed rationalist does not blink the fact that human reason is all too imperfect to explain all the facts of life, or to compre-

hend by adequate survey the entire field of human experience. He does agree to the inadequacy of the human faculty to meet the vast expanse of a tantalising universe. But, he questions the arrogation to any other agency the right to replace it. Imperfect as is the instrument, there is so far none other as yet fashioned which will satisfy even to the extent to which reason will serve the needs of man. The more logical cry ought to be not that reason may be done away with by the better mind of man, but on the other hand the solution lay in the direction of its better grounding, higher and more improved method of its application, a greater exercise of its own method, and a fuller and more comprehensive view of the area to be covered, and the relative significance of the march already accomplished. It is reason alone that must ever come to its rescue in order to enable man to overcome his limitations of thought, feeling and right conduct, not any other non-rational process induced into the human body by whatever method. Even the Gita acknowledges the supremacy of reason (*nahi gnanena* sadrisam, pavitram iha vidyate*, IV, 38) and there is no text in whatever creed or faith that does not appeal nor pay homage to the human talent. The defects of reason may be cured by reason alone, as time will make it out. (Kalenatmani vindati, *ibid.*) The denunciation of reason, meantime, goes merrily along, because men often know not what they say or do.

Reason again does not necessitate the disputations of controversy regarding its place in the scheme of human life. But the spectacle of an assumed abandon to a non-rational attitude seeking to patronise the professed votaries of the merely human level of mind would seem to call forth a little corrective. In that sense, a writer in the *Kalyana Kalpataru*, (May, 1937, *A Word to the Rationalists*, by Mr. F. C. Davar) declares that "in de-

throning religion, rationalism will only end in discrediting itself." He distinguished between temporary doubt, which is a tonic and a stimulant, and permanent doubt, which he regards as reprehensible, comparable to opium, depriving a person of all activity, making him indifferent to truth.' One cannot follow the basis of his classification of doubt into temporary and permanent, as there is nothing that is permanent under the sun. And if he means to fix any standard of permanency, in terms of time or otherwise, what his temporary period of doubt may legitimately extend to is another problem of ethical discipline. He may suffer a two-year period of doubt with impunity, provided after the expiry of the sentence, he gets round overnight, to be saved the next morning! Recognising the increased hold that rationalism has on the intelligentsia, he maintains—what few among his comrades will concede—that it is the friend of religion; **though it chooses to parade itself in the guise of a foe.** This is typical of the religious turn of mind that it is not afraid of appearing to be different from what it really is, and that it will not hesitate to impute similar false colours to anybody else. After this, the compliment to rationalism that it is an infallible remedy for all errors and superstitions, that it checks bigotry, cures eccentricity, ridicules fanaticism and purifies society, leaves behind the odour of superior complacency, of patronage, and benevolent testimony.

The writer is anon betrayed into the real homage due to reason when he had to admit that 'when society is reduced to stagnation by the dead-weight of dogma and tradition, we look up to rationalism to restore the balance by the substitution of liberty for bondage, and reason for authority.' That is an involuntary exaltation of reason, comparable to the dictum in the Gita that whenever disorder prevails, I shall be born to restore balance, in every age. (*Dharmasams thapanarthaya sambhavami yuge yuge*, IV, 8). It is through reason, the merely human talent, the fra-

*'Gnana' means 'knowledge' not 'reason'—Editor.

gile, limited capacity to argue from the wherefore's and why's, that the evolution of the human mind, and through it the relative perfection of the human race are being achieved. But, here comes the full stop and the question of the controversialist in religion. "But the danger in modern society is that rationalism invariably tends to overstep its limits." Hence it is possible to have overdoses of reason; not only is that possible, but it is really a danger actually rampant in modern society, according to the contributor to the above-quoted journal (Kalayana Kalpataru, Gorakhpur, May, 37, p. 426); and one of the immediate effects of this overdose is the disbelief in God "because God cannot be proved purely through the rational faculty." Yes, either an impure rationality, or a pure irrationality would be required to be brought in proof of God's existence. Mark you, even there it is proof that is attempted, and proof pertains to the purely intellectual faculty. These apologists are never tired of repeating that religion begins where reason ends, (cf. p. 427) as if the end of reason is the best thing to be hankered after, a consummation devoutly to be wished for. "Devotion pre-supposes ignorance, the helplessness, and hence the complete surrender of the devotee to the object of his adoration." That is the common run of the religious mind, known as the Mudha Bhakti, which however is farther from the teaching of founders like Sankara or Ramanuja. Theirs was a comprehensive human devotion, the allegiance of the individual mind to the highest and best ideals of collective well-being. It is sheer injustice to impute to them that they brought unto God a full heart 'even though the head be empty.' It would be setting at naught the mountains of philosophical literature brought forth by these Acharyas to presume that they indulged in mere Mudha Bhakti towards an ill-conceived intellectual phantorn.

And the last argument of Mr. Davar erred by ascribing to the rationalists a

position which they can never assume. No rationalist worthy of his head will 'refuse to believe that there is anything unknown or unknowable in the universe; nothing that is incomprehensible is ever dreamt of in their philosophy. If they do come across something that transcends reason, they would rather turn their backs than fall on their feet before it.' It has only to be stated that both the acts of turning away and falling on the feet are equally irrational. Rationalists never turn their backs from facts. If they were to do so, they cease to be rational. True, they do not fall on the feet. Because facts have got to be faced and comprehended rather than accepted and adored. They are so many problems calling forth the power of imagination in order to resolve them, and merely to lie prostrate in front thereof does not advance the human cause by an inch. Devotion comes in the line of persistent application and energising with a view to ultimate solution. And as the learned contributor himself recognises, truth is always relative and our apprehension thereof is conditioned by the limits of our own prepossessions. "Absolute Truth is unknowable" writes Mr. Davar, who thinks that rationalists are out for fathoming the unfathomable. Certainly not. Their field is the exploration of the relative truth, and avowedly even rationalism is relative. After his denunciation of rationalism, Mr. Davar remains thoroughly rational (one hopes permanently so,) because he uses the method of argument throughout his long discourse, the method of persuasion through appeal to reason and the better sense, rather than depending upon the whip of authority for driving his theme. While condemning reason as being cold and calculating, he proves its supremacy by his simile comparing it with the surgeon's knife. It is the doctor's dexterous wielding of the knife that leads to success more than all the love, sympathy and mercy that in the less-skilled hands may not lead to satisfactory result, and may even lead to positive danger.

References to individual emancipation through devotion and intellect are hardly convincing if it is sought to condemn reason and knowledge as being "encumbrances" to be renounced 'in order to open the flood-gates of the heart to the raging billows of devotion.' The Gnana Marga is as much praised as the Bhakti Marga, and the latter divorced from knowledge is scarcely appreciated even according to the traditional schools of philosophical thought. If all philosophising is a process of ratiocination one fails to see any ground for condemning reason in the terms the learned contributor does. Presumptuous self-confidence is not the snare of the rationalist only. The apologists of religion feel as if they had comprehended the whole absolute truth, the fulness of God, of whose presence they talk so much, and who they think lies chained to their feet. It is possible to be irreligious, being over religious, if it is unreasonable to be too reasonable. For after all the distinction

between theists and atheists is an artificial class-mark invented by interested apologists of endowed creeds. While all humans are more or less rational there is no force in creating these divisions of ungraded rationality. Writes Mr. Davar: "The very fact that people use their reason in matters spiritual shows that they are interested in religion." How, my dear sir, does that follow? I scent something strange in your logic, even if the fragrance of your religiosity pleases the nose. If people use reason "even" in matters spiritual, does not that show that men, in whatever front, cannot get away from reason? Not because they are interested in religion, but because they owe an infallible allegiance to reason do men reason at all, and my friend Mr. Firoze C. Davar, M.A., LL.B., can claim to be no exception. Time enough that the religionists realise the supremacy of human reason.

Cocanada, 16-5-1937.

NOTES & HAPPENINGS

BY

Dr. C. L. D'AVOINE

In "The Bombay Chronicle" (Sunday Edition) of the 20th of June last, there appears an article on the "Dangers of Communalism in Sport" which is very true. The writer of that article quite rightly draws attention to the present tendency of different communities showing strong communal bias in sport. "The Chronicle" cites certain instances to show what dangerous proportions this attitude is assuming. Since communalism in India is strongly linked with religious differences, thoughtful people who deplore communalism in this country, may appreciate the baneful effect of religions to keep aflame this tendency. In one of the instances quoted by "The Chronicle," it would appear that many of the Mahomedan spectators in a recent football match were greatly incensed and became menacing when a Mahomedan player was intentionally or accidentally kicked during the

progress of the game. They excitedly shouted that no Mahomedan should play on that field again.

* * *

Since the match was between Europeans and Mahomedan teams, why no Mahomedan? If they wanted to show their resentment against the alleged rough treatment received by one of their players, they might have shouted "No Indian player", but here significance was attached to the religion that the player professed. If it had been a Hindu or a Parsi who was allegedly unfairly treated, probably those Mahomedans would have remained quite indifferent. But the spirit displayed was that no one professing the same creed as oneself should any way be so humiliated. As regards others that's their own look out!

* * *

It is a pity that in a country like India, religion always looms first on the horizon before everything else. It even affects, as we all know, the political constitution of the country, and as long as this is the case, communalism will always be one of the most difficult problems to tackle with in India. There is no reason, however, why this should be tolerated in Sport. Sporting Associations should refuse entries of teams with religious labels. Such teams as "The Catholic Cricket or Hockey Club", "The Young Muslim Eleven" and so forth should be discouraged from displaying their religious bigotry in Sport. People here are too much inclined to make a show of their religious faith.

Of late, it has become the fashion for many Mahomedan leaders all over India to celebrate their Prophet's birthday with great eclat. On that occasion exuberant speeches are made extolling the life of Mahomet and the wonderful religion he founded. Most of them stressed the fact that Islamism is a religion of brotherhood, is a tolerant one and has spread culture wherever it has extended. Sober people look in vain for this culture in Arabia, Persia, Northern India, the Sudan and elsewhere. As regards tolerance, it was by an irony of fate that the same day that these enthusiasts were talking so extravagantly, the Sunnis of Lahore wanted to thrash the life out of the Shi'ahs of the same place because the latter made use of a prayer said to be objectionable to the Sunnis, and about the same time the Sunnis of Bombay, Calcutta, Madras, Cawnpore and other places in India rioted against the Hindus on account of the latter's music in the vicinity of mosques.

Speaking of riots in India in connection with Hindu's music before Mahomedans' mosques, we owe a debt of gratitude to the Bombay City Police for the prompt and stern measures taken by them in dealing with the outbreak of last May in Kamathipura. What might have become another serious riot was then avert-

ed and nipped in the bud. This time, as was the case with the serious riot of 4 or 5 years ago, the trouble started over the religious zeal of a young Mahomedan lad who, it is alleged, boldly interfered with a Hindu marriage procession and objected to the playing of music.

It is time that sincere Mahomedan social leaders wake up to the danger of such young fanatics in their community. These misguided and ignorant youths take pride in boasting of their religious convictions. On the first day of the Byculla Temple riot in October last, a number of such lads were seen parading the streets and announcing their readiness to die for their faith. Though this drew tears in the eyes of their admirers and was loudly praised by them, these youths disappeared the moment they caught sight of the approaching armed police.

It is unfortunately known that some young people of that type but much bolder, have actually murdered in cold blood some unfortunate Hindus who were accused of having insulted the Prophet of Islam. Only a few days ago, the papers announced that a Hindu was murdered upcountry by a young Mahomedan for an alleged insult to the Prophet Mahomed, and another was recently sentenced to death for murdering a Hindu doctor who had given the name of "Ahmad" to his donkey. Such misguided zeal should be sternly discouraged by enlightened Mahomedans themselves.

"The Statesman" of Calcutta of the 31st May last, reports that a Prophetic Bull was causing great sensation in Kurra-
chee. In appearance, it would appear, that there was nothing to distinguish that prodigy from other ordinary bulls except that it wore clothes and ornaments in keeping with its dignity as a prophet. Among other things it did, it specialized in the lines of foretelling cotton futures and share forecasts. It also could identify people in a parade. Needless to add that a number of respectable and trustworthy people have vouched for the truth of this.

Such trustworthy, educated and respectable people are always forthcoming in India to testify to miracles. In the case of this bull, doctors, lawyers, school-masters and magistrates have given their testimony to this marvel. This reminds one of the fact that when Mr. Gandhi some years ago tried to reconcile Hindus and Mahomedans, an idol in a Nagpur temple was observed one morning to cry bitterly. It was surmised by some doctors, LL.B's, Magistrates and B.Sc's who swore they saw the miracle, that the idol cried because he foresaw the irreconcilability of the two communities. India is truly the land of marvels!

* * *

Mr. Chapman Cohen, in a few remarkable articles in the recent issues of "The Freethinker", has given a masterly explanation of the real religious meaning of the Coronation Ceremony. He traces this rite from primitive tribes and he opines that despite the pomp, pagentry of the show and modern trappings of those who took part in the recent ceremony in London, the primitive religious meaning remains unchanged.

The king after being anointed by the Archbishop received divine favours denied to him before. As soon as he became the Lord's Anointed, he received seven-fold gifts, namely, the Spirit of Counsel and Ghostly Strength, the Spirit of Knowledge and true Godliness and the Spirit of Holy Fear. The whole thing was an anachronism, though perhaps few who witnessed that ceremony realized it. Mr. E. Thurtle, M.P., in "The Literary Guide" for June 1937 stressed the fact that the Church of England avidly seized the opportunity to derive as much influence and benefit from its association with Royalty in this archaic ceremony. Thanks to wide publication and skilful advertisement by vested interest, the English people were made Coronation-minded long before the event took place. The boosting of Royalty in England at present is being done with a zest that is really remarkable and the reason is not far to seek.

* * *

Catholicism is having serious trouble at the moment in Germany. When one considers its position in Spain and in other countries on the Continent, it looks as if this religion is fast tottering in Europe. Meanwhile, it is making some progress in England where the people there are inclined to be very tolerant about it because they no longer fear and hate it as in the past. A Catholic may feel very complacent about it and may retort that his Church has weathered many serious storms and has always emerged triumphant. Poor fellow; his idea of triumph must be very funny indeed. The fact is that Catholics have been made to believe that God, himself, protects their Church and no evil shall prevail against it. Yet, if they would seriously consider what their Church was 600 years ago and what it is to-day, they might just begin to realize that the divine promise does not appear very very very promising since the world has begun to be properly enlightened on religious pretensions and claims.

* * *

In a recent issue of the Daily Mirror of London a picture is given of a Roman Catholic bishop blessing a number of elephants before being sent to a Zoo in Belgium. In Paris, according to "La Vie Catholique" of 8th May 1937, an organ presented by Cardinal Marchetti-Selvaggioni to the Dominican Convent of Saint-Sabnie was solemnly blessed before being installed in the Church. There must be devils in elephants and organs to be thus exorcised by priestly benedictions. Priests, of course, will bless anything as long as the public ask them to do so. After all, it causes no effort to bless and it is always profitable to the blesser.

* * *

An anonymous well-wisher and friend of the writer, anxious for the salvation of his soul, has sent him by post a long rigmarole purporting to be the report of a striking miracle that happened to a young English girl 25 years ago. This woman, it would appear, was a sufferer from tubercular meningitis for nine years. (Let it be noted that tubercular

meningitis is usually fatal within a few months of its onset). She had, the report says, become a living skeleton and was given up by eminent doctors. One night Christ, accompanied by some shining Angels, appeared unto her and invited her to drink something from a chalice, which she did. Immediately after she jumped from her bed hale and hearty and regained her lost flesh instantly. The report goes on to say that the miracle

caused a great sensation in London, though the woman, through sheer modesty, refused to disclose her name. To-day she and a man responsible for the publication of that report, which has evidently impressed some credulous Catholics, are running a nursing home in London for faith-cure. After this one does not wonder that Catholics are capable of believing any supernatural nonsense related to them.

A MINORITY VIEW

BY

I. CHANGE

That all the gods are dumb. That none of them ever spake unto men. That there has never been a communication to mankind other than men's own inventions, illusions and speculations. Invented messages to add authority to their own utterances. (Similar claims are made even to-day). That men have created thousands of divinities in their own image; enlarged shadows of themselves; and have endowed them with their own characteristics; swayed by like appetites and passions. Osiris, Isis, Horus, Brahma, Krishna, Siva, Ra, Thoth, Bel, Hea, Mithras, Buddha, Pallas-Athene, Christus, Poseidon, Zeus, and 10,000 others. Jahveh is no exception. He was just the local, tribal, Lliputian deity of a semi-barbarous nomadic people. When man was young; a primitive; his world a province; his knowledge very circumscribed, even then it was entirely imaginary to believe that the Creator of even his Lliputian world held intercourse with him. To-day, with the marvellous knowledge which science has lately brought us of limitless numbers of worlds; of stupendous magnitudes; or enormous distances in time and space; this tiny globe a sand speck, this belief becomes preposterous and fatuous in the extreme. And the evidence. That these alleged divine communications added nothing to knowledge. That always they mirrored only the at-

tainments and mental capacity of the hearer—indeed his predilections. Also his ignorances; his inspired errors; his limitations. That none of these divinities, or their confidantes, foresaw the wonderful achievements of science since made. That all were "flatearthers." They knew nothing but of their own generation. That the whole scheme is trumpery, dwarfish, childish, shot through with dreams and visions, with witchcraft and Munchausen tales. With its inhumane Valhalla of eternal torture for ephemeral conduct; repugnant alike to intelligence and to justice. A hell of which all decent men are ashamed and which is to-day almost wholly jettisoned. An unintelligent Paradiso; monotonous beyond endurance; inane; obviously the conception of childhood where all will be singers; all musicians; all equal; all Communists for all eternity.

But its latitude and longitude is suppressed. What would such an institution here and now down your road, Mr. Commonsense, be labelled?

That it is contrary to experience that miracles should be true; but it is not contrary to experience that testimony should be false. That deities change from age to age; from country to country. Indeed to the same individual the divinity of

youth is not the god of maturity. That the purpose of 50,000,000,000 worlds is obviously not man. That nations, unaided by revelations, had, by self-reliance, reached a higher standard of culture and civilisation; such as the Egyptians, Sumerians, Greeks, Romans, and others.

That the religions of Greece for centuries B.C. taught the union of immortal deity and mortal woman. Taught the birth, death and resurrection of the man—God. Indeed, trinities, miracles, virgin births, resurrections appear in several ancient myths. The Christ story is but a variant; unoriginal; unconfirmed; invented by Greek minds.

Christ left no statement; neither did Mary, or Joseph, or any of his brethren. Or any of the Apostles, or the Shepherds, or the Wise Men, or the resurrected dead. None from even one of the cured; none from even one witness. What remains? A few leaflets unsigned, undated; containing only "hearsay" statements, second hand or twenty-second hand. No Law Court would entertain such. Why will men decline unsigned, undated cheques or deeds and accept unsigned, undated Gospels? Because the latter are non-essential.

That mentally we are "kiddies" just out of the cradle—uncivilized, unreasonable beings; hence poverty and war. That, unlike the humans, all the gods are blind: that none of them have ever yet seen human misery. And the evidence; that men are always and everywhere endeavouring to circumvent the evils of nature.

That, again, unlike the humans, all the divinities are deaf. We beseech in vain: the skies are leaden; unanswering; everywhere, always. The praying wheels of Tibet are as ineffective; as windy as our own appeals. Prayer is but a confession of weakness, a dethroning of self-reliance, making weak minds weaker. Our requests ascend to our—ceilings.

That survival is a pathetic self-delusion, invented to blunt the sharp-sword

of death. That the evidence for cessation is overwhelming. That forty millions of people die annually, and from this mighty multitude and down all the ages we get—silence unbroken. There is no evidence of survival that would survive the sievings of a Law Court.

That "spiritual" and "faith" are merely "hide outs". That demons, devils, divinities, spirits, angels, Valhallas, Paradisoës, Penitentiaries, have only an imaginary existence. That the future is a very safe warehouse for prophecies and promises.

That to-day a schoolboy knows infinitely more than all the divinities of antiquity—and their confidantes—all rolled into one. So much for their divinity. That there is no sin: there are offences against the community. That morals are solely a reflection of public opinion and like all else are evolved. That virtues will ultimately be all that is pleasing, beneficent to men: contrariwise vices will be all that is maleficent—no more. That this whole controversy could be tested validly; but it will be found that such will be studiously avoided like the Black Death. Why?

That self-reliance is the sole solvent in this very certain world. Self-reliance has given us printing, steam, astronomy. Knowledge of this world and of the sublime universe. It has eliminated small-pox, has reduced illiteracy; T.B.; cancer. That if men had loved facts as they loved fancies; had worshipped knowledge as they worshipped "the Unknown," had not been side-tracked, preventible poverty, disease, injustices, ignorance, wars would long since have vanished from the earth. That men's thoughts and activities should be diverted from vague, indefinite abstractions, from unheeding divinities; from silent skies to the practical affairs of life, here and now, where **humanity** is being daily crucified, so that step by step all should be made as happy as is possible. **Self-reliance is the sole solvent.**

Oakdale Road,
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(Continued from Page 111.)

Coronation.

We are trying to determine the extent to which a professedly civilized country has been led to the semi-deification of its King, and to indicate some of the causes that have contributed to this result. Of the fact there can be no question. Not for centuries has the religious aspect of the Kingship been so emphasized, and nowhere save amongst uncivilized peoples has the King as chief and semi-medicine-man of the tribe been so publicly connected. It may be only a straw that indicates the flow of the stream, but we invite a recollection of the number of recent occasions on which that embodiment of cunning ecclesiasticism, the Archbishop of Canterbury, has been present with the existing King on public occasions. Even at a semi-political gathering such as the lucheon of the Commonwealth premiers, the Archbishop occupied a prominent place.

It is not easy to date the beginning of a historic phase, but a starting point may be fixed with the date of the Jubilee of Queen Victoria. She had a long reign, and by mere length of living, had become an institution. Further and a more important factor in the bemusement of the public mind, her reign coincided with an enormous development of British governed territory and of the national wealth. The long reign tended to make the country forget the character of her predecessors (in any case a woman cannot lead the openly vicious life of man) and the growth in wealth and possessions induced people, in the true spirit of the god-king worshippers, to place the development of the country to the credit of the throne. This tendency to deification was always there, but a knowledge of social psychology hardly existed, and the "transference" was an easy one.

Victoria's Jubilee marked the opening of a period of Imperialism, Militarism and King-worship, and after Victoria's death the game was played with cunning, skill and persistence. On every occasion

the Royal Family was kept well in the limelight. Not merely the monarch, but every one who was in the line of succession. No matter how trivial the occasion, or how unmediated the visit to a curiosity shop, or how accidental the King's or Queen's conversation with a working-man or woman, a picture in the papers was bound to appear. The most common place remarks were duly hailed and reported as exhibitions of profound wisdom, or illustrations of human feeling that were remarkable—in a Royal Family. The most commonplace action was hailed as though a new cosmic wonder had been discovered. The god chief had come down to the level of ordinary decent humanity. Those who did not worship royalty expected from it the same degree of sense of speech and decency of action as was found with ordinary folk. It was their worshippers who were astounded when it came. It is just as surprising to discover that a God is a man as it is to discover that a man is a god.

Never has a Royal Family been so persistently, so carefully, advertised. Even the babies were used to exploit the sentimentality of the British public. Enlarged pictures were published of the eldest baby of the Duke of Kent, giving prominence to his first tooth. If that tooth could be preserved it might rival the preserved footmark of the Buddha, and would rank with the cigar which a certain peer has preserved in a special cabinet for the adoration of his descendants—the cigar was given him by Edward VII. A life of the Princess Elizabeth was published when she was six years of age, and sold by the thousand. After the Jubilee of George V. the *Daily Telegraph* and the *Times* published letters suggesting that there was more than mere coincidence in the spell of fine weather which ended with the Jubilee. After the death of George V., a biography of his dogs was published, and many pictures of his favourite pony; and when, some six months after, his favourite parrot died, it was promptly stuffed and

sent to the Natural History Museum at Kensington. If the chairs upon which George had sat could have been cut into splinters and sold at a good price, they might have found the Chancellor the money for re-armament. We seemed to be getting back rapidly to the food-producing, rain giving, victory-bestowing god-king, and one began to have a keener appreciation of the relic-worship of the Church, and the veneration of saints. Between the advertising methods of the American film star, and those used for the Royal Family, the difference does not seem very great. At any rate one appears to be getting right back to the frame of mind which dominates the Fiji Islanders and the primitive African tribes with regard to their chiefs.

* * *

The God-Man

The gap between ourselves and pre-historic man was lessened considerably when the Archbishop of Canterbury and other prominent divines began to emphasize the magical character of the Coronation and to sound the "Recall to Religion." There was an added motive here. The Archbishop had in January, 1936, commended Edward VIII. to the British Empire on the grounds of his personal knowledge of his character from boyhood. At the end of the year he had discovered that Edward was quite unfit for the post of King, on the avowed grounds of his dissolute acquaintances—well-known to the Archbishop all along—and because he wished to marry Mrs. Simpson. Had Edward concealed his intentions in this direction the Archbishop would have duly transformed him into an incarnation of the voice of God, and if Edward had lived with Mrs. Simpson instead of suggesting marriage, the Archbishop would have no more denounced occupants of the throne for similar conduct.

and so assist a revival of religion. And of the Coronation might be emphasized, it has been done with a thoroughness that no body of Churchmen has dared

to do for centuries. Bearing in mind what I said before that from the secular point of view, the Coronation adds nothing whatever to the status or power of the King, we may take two or three leading utterances. First the Archbishop of Canterbury:—

The consecration of the crowning of the King and Queen (is) a great religious act. . . . In his Coronation and Crowning the King. . . is the representative of his people. . . . They associate themselves with him in a great act of consecration to the service of God.

The Archbishop of York says, the Coronation ceremony

is the dedication of the King and of his consort to the service of the King of Kings. . . . *The King incarnates the community.*

The italics in the last quotation are mine. I agree with it entirely. It is the essence of the Coronation ceremony and takes us back to the anthropology of the subject, with which I will deal later. It is the primitive idea that the chief not merely incarnates the "mana" of the community, but that he also incarnates the tribal joss. He is selected by God (as the Pope is selected by God through the inspiration received by the college of cardinals) as the chief medicine-man among savages "smells out" the one who is to embody the tribal deity.

Canon Anthony, of St. George's Windsor, says:—

The King was meant to be the human symbol of Divine Power. . . . (He) is God's minister typifying the twin ideas of the Divine authority and the Divine guardianship. The English Sovereign is no mere figurehead or State official.

The Bishop of Peterborough:—

The Coronation is a religious ceremony throughout. By it we believe

that the King receives the grace of God by which alone he can execute his office.

Here it is, as plainly put as it can possibly be. The intensive advertising of the past fifty years has not been without results. We do not have it openly said the King is King by divine right, but it has always been there in the Coronation Service, which, so far as Kinghood is concerned, is a magical ceremony or nothing. Nothing has, in form, been added; the only new phase is that never since the time of the first Stuart Kings have any of our "spiritual" leaders had the impudence to proclaim so plainly the deification of the King. I shall have to return to this incarnation of the God in the King later. At present it is necessary only to note that there is in this expressed, in unmistakable words, one of the oldest beliefs in the history of the social life of man. Among the Shiluks of the White Nile, it is an article of faith that the spirit of the god is incarnate in the chief. Among the ancient Mexicans the King was worshipped as a god, and one of his duties was to take an oath that he would cause the rain to come, the sun to shine, and the earth to be fertile. Even with the existing Japanese, the Mikado is officially the descendant of the gods.

What difference in kind is there between these things, and the declarations of the Archbishops and Bishops, and the whole tone of the Coronation Service? The only difference is that the modern ceremony is more expensive, the people are more showily dressed, and the spectators consider themselves the cream of British culture; in every other respect the thing is direct from the jungle. With a fine ignorance (real or pretended) of history, literature and science, Sir Cecil Harcourt-Smith, writing in the **Daily Telegraph** for May 7, says that a spectator of the Coronation,

looking down the vistas of the past might, in imagination, see a line of Kings reaching back to Saxon Egbert in 785, the Coronation Service hardly changed from that to-day.

The imaginary spectator **might**—if he knew as little about the subject as Sir Cecil Harcourt-Smith appears to know. If he really understood what he was looking at he would probably reflect:—

How little mankind understands, how slowly it learns! Looking down the vistas of the past, whether in terms of years or in terms of cultural development, here is a ceremony that runs back to a time when the god-king was believed to be responsible for the stability of nature and the welfare of man. Looking through the outward trappings, here is the savage ceremony wherein the King is endowed with divine power, and becomes an incarnation of the deity. Westminster Abbey has, in principle advanced not a step beyond the jungle. In this ceremony the King, the Courtiers, the Christian hierarchy join hands with their spiritual brethren in primitive Australia, in the African forest, and with the culture of the Stone Age.

The clergy have shown their hands. Cunning, but not possessed of a far-seeing intelligence, they have spoken more plainly than they have dared to do for centuries. They invite plain speech in reply. We must see that they get it.

* * *

A Very Ancient Magic

I must admit that the clergy are speaking by the book. They are right, so far, in assuming that the King, whether he be a fool or a rogue, a debauchee or a monument of virtue, is by the application of the magical "holy oil" lifted out of the common ranks of mankind. Holy oil has always played a part in transforming episodes. Readers of Apuleius, will remember how, in the **Golden Ass** women are transformed into animal forms in this way. And students of witchcraft also know that it was by anointing themselves with a magical oil that women were able to assume different forms and fly through the air to have a "right royal" debauch with Satan. It is **after** the King has been transformed by this holy "Macassar"

that the Archbishop declares the King has the power of God in him, and that the princes and the peers (the latter representing the people also) promise to the King "earthly worship." The incarnation is complete. Had not Edward VIII. insisted on marrying the woman he loved, had he been less open in expressing an opinion about the distressed areas, and confined himself to inspecting hospitals, looking at cup-football matches, and performing other simple public functions, he would have to-day had the Archbishop's blessing and would have had God incarnate in him. The gods are no respecters of persons. Their incarnations cover an extraordinary variety of individuals.

About three centuries ago a King of England was shortened by a head for acting upon the principle of the divine right of kings. There was some excuse for Charles Stuart. The people were yet in the shadow of the Dark Ages, and but little of the real history of man was known. His people were guided by the Bible, and in the New Testament the duty

of blind obedience to the King is clearly enunciated. That, too, is in the Coronation Service. In that service it is said that it is only by divine power that the King can carry out his duties. That is nonsense. The history of the past two hundred and fifty years proves that **any-one** can carry them out. In an hereditary monarchy no personal quality of any kind is requisite. The "people associate themselves with him in a great act of consecration to God." No one knows better than the Archbishop that this is a lie. There are millions of the King's subjects quite prepared to carry out their duties, as subjects, so long as the King carries out his part of the contract. But they do not, and will not, lower their intellectual self-respect by pretending to believe in the magical ceremony of the Holy oil and wonder-working spoon. This farrago of nonsense should have no place in the appointment of a titular head of the State. Our experience of Kings has not been such as to lead us to become enamoured of this persisting Stone Age ceremony.

(To be Continued)

Sunday 25th July 1937

at 1 p. m.

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AT

THE MONGINI'S

CHURCHGATE STREET,
FORT, BOMBAY.

K. T. Chandy

(Asst. Editor 'Reason')

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REASON

(Estd. 1931)

The Journal of The Rationalist
Association of India.
5-12, Queen's Road,
Bombay.

Editor :

Prof. R. D. Karve, M.A.
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*All contributions should be addressed to the
Editor "REASON" Jagjivan Mansions, 13, New
Bhatwadi, Bombay 4, and should reach the editor on
or before the 15th of each month.*

*The writers of the articles in this journal are
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CORRESPONDENCE.

A. Usmani (Agra). Many thanks for suggestions. They are being put before the Committee. Sorry for delay.

J. Ezekiel (Bombay). Many thanks for your kind words. Very pleased to know that you will be able to attend the lunch. We wish more would appreciate the difficulties under which we are working. Particularly those who are in a position to help in more ways than one,

R. Hurry (Bombay). Many thanks for addresses of likely new members. *Reason* copies are being sent.

AT THE SECRETARIES' TABLE.

Our appeal for contribution towards our funds has been sympathetically received by the National Secular Society and the Rationalist Press Association of London, and the same has been published in the *Freethinker*. We thank them for this fraternal gesture.

We take the opportunity to remind our sympathisers and well-wishers in India that their munificent contributions towards our funds—specially the Reserve Fund—is an imperative necessity, when these funds are almost at their lowest point.

We draw the attention of our readers to the announcement about the Lunch to be held on the 25th of this month.

We are sorry to note that some of our members will not be in a position, to come down to Bombay, and attend the lunch, but may we request them to organise such functions in their respective areas and invite friends for the popularization of Rationalism?

We congratulate Mr. Chapman Cohen, the septuagenarian sentinel of Freethought in England, on being re-elected for the twenty-first time as the President of the National Secular Society.

Readers will note that we are reproducing a series of articles from his brilliant pen exposing the conspiracy of the clergy to represent the coronation as a religio-mystical transformation of an ordinary man into a divine being.

Abraham Solomon,
Joint Honorary Secretary.

We extend a warm welcome to the following new members—

Dr. A. P. Moolgaonkar, London,
10 s.

Mr. Shastri, London, 10 s.
A. Rahim Beg, Nathiagali, N.W.F.P.
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Donation.

Edward Henderson, England, 5s.

OBITUARY.

A. P. D'Costa.

With the deepest regret we have learned of the death of a very old member and valued friend in the person of Mr. Austin Paul D'Costa. Warm-hearted, generous and sincere, he was a silent worker in the cause of freethought, and always took a keen interest in the R.A.I. He gave away, free, hundreds of freethought publications issued by the R.P.A. and the Pioneer Press of London to help the "best of causes." A glance at his little library showed that he read widely and was interested in deep philosophical problems.

He was a member of the Rationalist Press Association of London for more than twenty-five years and of the R.A.I. since the very beginning.

He was also a recognised classical pianist.

Mr. D'Costa died of heart failure on Tuesday, June 29, at the age of 63. In his death the R.A.I. has lost a genuine freethinker and friend.

"O for the touch of a vanish'd hand
And the sound of a voice that is still."
A.S.

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- If you desire Intellectual Liberty and Rational Freedom.
- If you hate Superstition, Priestcraft, Fanaticism, Bigotry and Hypocrisy.

Jožn

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For further particulars please write to:—

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A thinking man is the worst enemy
the Prince of Darkness can have.
—Carlyle.

REASON

THE JOURNAL OF THE RATIONALIST ASSOCIATION OF INDIA

"TO COMBAT ALL RELIGIOUS AND SOCIAL BELIEFS AND CUSTOMS THAT CANNOT STAND THE TEST OF REASON AND TO ENDEAVOUR TO CREATE A SCIENTIFIC AND TOLERANT MENTALITY AMONG THE PEOPLE OF THIS COUNTRY." *"Objects of the Rationalist Association of India."*

New Series.

AUGUST 1937

No. 7.

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THE WILL TO BELIEVE

BY

R. D. KARVE

The fundamental difference between religions and Science is that all religions insist on Faith while science emphasizes the advantages of scepticism. Even a generally accepted scientific theory is not a dogma and is willingly given up by any real scientist in favour of another which may give a better explanation of observed facts. Or when new facts are observed which do not fit into an accepted theory, a more adequate theory will have to be formulated, but against a working hypothesis which have to be modified later on.

But what is the Faith which is made so much of by all religions? It can only mean a belief in something which you are not quite sure about. If you are really sure of anything, for instance of the fact

that two and two make four, there cannot be any virtue in believing it. There remain two other possibilities. Either you may be sure that a statement is not true and still you believe it, or you may have your doubts about it and still believe it. In either case, Faith is a lie, and religions invariably insist on this prevarication because they are afraid that doubt leads to arguments, which may be very damaging to the so-called truth proclaimed by them. Faith is the "will to believe" in spite of evidence to the contrary, or at least without any evidence in favour.

This will to believe leads to innumerable superstitions, such as theosophy, Christian Science, spiritism etc. Science admits that it cannot explain everything and this admission is caught hold of by

people to whom a particular kind of belief affords relief from mental tension, and in such cases the will to believe is so powerful that even bungling charlatans are able to impose upon scientists who are supposed to be able to weigh evidence. Really speaking, an honest scientist is often no match for a clever cheat and moreover the conditions under which so-called occult phenomena are produced render it practically impossible to detect trickery. For science, there is no such thing as occult or supernatural. When a scientist comes across an unaccustomed phenomenon, he tries to bring it into a line with other known phenomena. If conditions such as darkness are insisted on by the performer, the scientist is obviously handicapped. But if the scientist himself is imbued with the will to believe, there is an end of all investigation and the evidence of even an eminent scientist in this case is of no value. Unscrupulous people take advantage of such conditions to proclaim that the so-called occult phenomena are produced by discarnate spirits or whatever other name they choose to invent.

How easily scientists may be cheated is illustrated by the case of Margaret Fox and her sister, who could unaccountably produce raps. Shrewd observers pointed out that they were produced by the cracking of the toe-joints. She herself confessed in 1888 how she had been cheating the public for several years. Of this same Margaret Fox, Sir William Crookes wrote: "With a full knowledge of the numerous theories which have been started, chiefly in America, to explain these sounds, I have tested them in every way that I could devise, until there has been no escape from the conviction that they were true objective occurrences not produced by trickery or mechanical means." And even now, after the exposure, this kind of testimony is quoted as evidence in favour of mediums.

Another instance is that of Signora Eusapia Palladino, who went about collecting scientific testimony of this kind,

and moving tables and even objects at a distance from her seat in a half-dark room and these objects sometimes rested on the heads of so-called scientific sitters. But at last she was detected in New York in 1910, when two observers, unknown to her, and dressed in black, managed to get under the table and saw the left foot of the medium propelling the table whenever it was seen to move.

Other well-known mediums have been exposed innumerable times, but the fraud still continues, because the will to believe is indomitable. Such people will believe in spirit photographs, spirit fingerprints or any other kind of humbug. Sir Arthur Conan Doyle claimed to possess pictures of genuine fairies with human figures and wings. Houdini and others have explained how they can be produced, but Sir Arthur was one of those who believe a medium to be honest, except on the particular occasion on which he or she may have been exposed!

Even when an observer is thoroughly sceptical, the conditions of the seance-room are such as to produce lethargy. Aldous Huxley wrote in the "Forum" that after thirty minutes in such conditions, he would not trust his own testimony. The human mind is a strange thing and apparently honest people sometimes become dishonest. Professor Boring of Harvard has related a story against himself in the Atlantic Monthly. "Mr. Code, one of the investigators of Margery, had agreed to produce all the phenomena by trickery. At the seance, Prof. Boring occupied an important position, holding Mr. Code's left hand. The demonstration was a success; things happened as mysteriously as if Margery was a medium. But once in the red light, Mr. Code admitted too much and Prof. Boring saw the trick was done. According to previous arrangement he was to have immediately reported any fraud into the dictaphone, but he did not. He wanted the seance to be a hundred per cent success; hence he did not "see" the fraud. His desire to have Mr. Code suc-

ceed was at the moment stronger than the impulse to fulfil what was demanded of him as a scientific investigator. Prof. Boring draws the obvious conclusion that persons, no matter how eminent, who are inclined to believe in psychic phenomena, do not make good investigators. The celebrated electrician Ampere, giving a demonstration before a scientific committee, and seeing that the galvanometer needle did not move when it should, gave it a mild push. He was so sure of his experiment that he could not bear to see it fail! Of course the next time it succeeded and he remarked "This time it goes of itself."

There is thus no evidence of any scientific value in favour of the existence of discarnate spirits, and the question of their communicating with human beings does not even arise. Because Science does not explain everything, it does not follow that any fanciful theories that anybody invents have to be accepted, especially when it looks far more probable that such people have ulterior motives. (Most of the information in this article has been taken from the chapter on "Yoga and Psychic Research" from the recent book "Yoga, a Scientific Evaluation" by Dr. Behanan of Yale University).

HUMANISM AND THE STATE

BY

M. V. V. K. RANGACHARI

Those who challenge the Congress High Command to declare its allegiance to orthodoxy are referred to the history of the British Throne in its relation to religion. The English concern for static preservation is perhaps higher than some other westerns, as the recent episode of the abdication of King Edward VIII attests. As Mr. Ernest Thurtle points out (*Literary Guide*, June, '37, p99) "the relationship of the king to his people is a purely human one" and some day it has got to be recognised that the primitive conception about the Monarch being a kind of "priest or medicine man" (in the words of Dr. Inge) has no substance. The Church did not relish his taking exception to the anointing ceremony, and in his last Act of State, in the Declaration of Abdication, there was not the conventional formula, "King...by the Grace of God, Defender of the Faith!" But the dust raised by the Archbishop of Canterbury is not unique in any sense. Henry VIII who secured to the English Throne the title from the Pope "Defender of the Faith" was apparently more romantic than pious. His love-poems are now available in the recent book, "The Muse of Monarchy" (pub: Eric Grant) which gives an idea of the religious views of the

kings and queens of England from Richard I (1157) to Queen Chaslotte (1818). Several Monarchs disregard religion and give the confident impression that however outwardly they might conform, actually they had little interest in matters of the faith, and dislike of a heterodox monarch has not merely occurred in our time. The state-secret of ministerial responsibility is neatly put by Charles II who wrote:

If death could speak, the king would say
In justice to his crown
His acts, they were his ministers'
His words they were his own.

Even Queen Elizabeth who was a believer was not quite orthodox in her views. "Similarly with the early Stuarts", James I and Charles I, whose poems are also included. John Rowland observes (*ibid* p.101) that the Church often disapproved of the thoughts and opinions of successive occupants of the Throne. This interesting sidelight on history supports his suggestion that "it is probably no accident that several of the poems of the monarchs have hitherto been stowed away safely in the seclusion of the British Museum Library and the

Library of the Ashmolean Museum at Oxford." How else may the phenomenon be explained in these days when the goddess of publicity rules supreme at every front? Even the boy-king Edward VI wrote a poem beginning:—

In Eucharist there is bread
Whereto I do consent:
Then with bread are our bodies fed;
And further what is meant?

The problem of the world to-day is the bread-problem, signifying an economic basis for world-order. The mysticism of the creeds does not affect the central problem of life, dependent on the pound sterling, the devaluated franc, and the American dollar. The standard of or-

thodoxy is not above the gold-standard, and politics will have to successfully manipulate the national and international resources rather than re-act to dogma and obsolete tradition, if better conditions of life are to be brought into being in our country or elsewhere.

A CORRECTION

July issue page 125 left column last paragraph omit two lines and please read as follows:—

The time, therefore, seemed to have come when the magico-religious nature of the Coronation might be emphasised, and so assist a revival of religion. And it has been done

CORONATION

(Continued from page 127)

(Reproduced from "FREETHINKER")

BY

CHAPMAN COHEN

MAKING A GOD

I feel impelled to step aside from my task of showing the identity of the Coronation Service with the most primitive of human superstitions, in order to draw attention to certain social implications of the May 12 ceremony. In the first place, I wish to express my gratitude to those who have helped in my main task by so plainly and so persistently advertising the essentially religious nature of the Coronation Service. To the clergy I made due acknowledgment last week; so far as newspapers and writers of books are concerned, I take the following from the Daily Telegraph of May 13, as representative:—

From the moment when the King and Queen entered the theatre and made their humble adoration to the altar . . . the service offered no moment of secular intrusion . . . All the leading men of Church and State . . . were seen as lay servers at the altar, assisting in the great

Christian rite of Holy Communion of the body and blood of Christ. Nothing which went before and nothing which followed after could approach in significance the Anointing . . . Without it . . . he would not be a Christian King, the Lord's Anointed . . . The solemnity of the silence and the prayer preceding told of the object of the Unction, the reception of the seven-fold gift of the Spirit—the Spirit of wisdom and government, the Spirit of counsel and ghostly strength, the Spirit of knowledge and true godliness and the Spirit of Holy Fear.

The Telegraph is absolutely correct. The moment the King entered the Abbey, he left all that we mean by education, science, and civilization behind him. The Archbishop was in command. It was all stark, unadulterated superstition decked out with diamonds and silks and furs in place of paint and feathers, with a great cathedral instead of an open "sacred" space, with the blare of trumpets and the peal of the organ in place of the beating

of a "tom-tom," with spectators who, by writing themselves as civilized hope to disguise the fact of their lapse into primitive savagery. I trust that those of my friends for whom the word "religion" has a fatal fascination will be reminded by the Coronation that this ceremony brings us back to the foundations of every religion in the world.

It is useless for the King, in real or affected modesty, to say that he is only an "ordinary man." He may have been that before the Coronation, but, unless the Archbishop is an imposter, he has, through the power of "holy oil" and magic spoon, endowed the King with a wisdom, divine power and knowledge, that he had not before the incantation, and produced a very different person. It is the working of a miracle we are witnessing in the Coronation. It converted George VI into a vehicle of divine power as it converted George I, II, III, and IV into persons filled with divine grace and wisdom. It is not surprising that even the staid *Financial Times*, in noting the Lanchester motor-car, said the present was "a particularly suitable car to review," because "the Lanchester company was formed in the year the King was born." There may be more here than meets the eye. Perhaps some drops of the "holy oil" were used for lubrication. We thank the clergy and the newspapers for making the essential nature of the Coronation Service so clear. But we wonder whether the Archbishop may not, for all his cunning, have overplayed his hand. Professedly civilized folk do not care to be so openly reminded that they are very little removed from savages.

* * *

It Pays to Advertise

Another aspect of the situation is of a more serious kind. I referred last week to the advertising campaign that has been carried on with regard to the Royal Family ever since the Jubilee of Victoria. The Coronation of George VI, originally planned for Edward VIII, marks its apogee. Begun twelve months ago for Edward,

every kind of advertising resource was employed. The Coronation itself was well staged, and the public rehearsals have been unprecedented. From the King to the horses the machinery has been laid quite bare. The public were not merely invited behind the scenes to witness the performers practising their parts; they were asked to assist by shouting and cheering to accustom the horses to the antics of the humans. Whatever "sanctity" there was about the Coronation ought to have been wiped out by this publicity. It was pure Hollywood. The dullest might have asked themselves what would have happened if the "Holy Spirit," looking down on Westminster Abbey had endowed one of the performers who at first took the part of the King with the qualities enumerated by the "Telegraph". Or if the "Holy Spirit," becoming confused, had passed over the actual ceremony, mistaking it for only another rehearsal. Which would have been worse—to have hit the wrong man or to have passed over the right one?

Surely, whatever solemnity was possible about the proceedings must have been wiped out by the tactics adopted. The solemnity became part of the show. The talk of "dignity" and "solemnity" had become mere showmen's talk. The people went out to see a gorgeous show and they got it.

* * *

Cheers, More Cheers!

There is, of course, the enthusiasm of the crowd, the long wait to see the King, and so forth—all, in newspaper jargon, impressive. But has anyone ever noted the enthusiasm of a whole town, the waving of flags, the cheers, the blowing of whistles that greets a victorious football team on its return to the "home town"? Or, the easy way in which a multitude can be brought together to witness any properly-advertised person or function. To assume that the cheering crowds, with its "We want the King!" were there out of personal love and devotion to the King is sheer nonsense.

Twelve months ago the people had no greater expectation of the Duke of York becoming King than they had of Mr. de Valera occupying that position. Little more than six months ago the public was assured that Edward was the "people's idol". It was advertised that his Coronation would arouse such enthusiasm as had never before been witnessed. The Duke of York was then just a member of the Royal Family for whom the general public had no special feeling. How then could the crowds of May 12 have been animated by affection for George VI? Devotion and affection are qualities that cannot spring up in a night like Jonah's gourd. It is a degradation to imagine that affection and devotion can be ordered by an Archbishop and a Prime Minister working through the medium of newspapers. To reply that the devotion of the public was to the throne and not to its occupant, is to admit what has already been said, that it does not matter who is King or what he is like—so long as he obeys the prescribed rules. You cannot have at the same time and in the same person a man who is no more than a symbol and who holds his place in virtue of the personal affection of the people.

I also wonder whether George VI knows, or remembers a story that is told of the Duke of Wellington. During his brief career as Prime Minister, the Duke was followed home by an angry crowd. After he had entered Apsley House some stones were thrown and windows were broken. The Duke ordered them to be covered from the inside with sheets of iron. Later, when the Duke had regained his popularity a crowd again followed him home, and this time called for a speech. Standing on the steps of his house the Duke pointed in silence to the iron-sheeted windows, and in silence passed within.

* * *

The Dangers of Mass Movements

This easy manipulation of public feeling is a fact that should seriously concern students of sociology. Public pas-

sion is so easily created; it is so difficult to allay. It discounts understanding and detests the intelligent examination of a question. It has no appreciation of good and bad; it is capable only of like and dislike. It may be used for one purpose to-day and for an opposite purpose to-morrow. Admitting all that may be said in favour of a monarchy, and even of that most stupid of all devices, the hereditary succession, the fact is sun-clear that before his accession the mass of the people knew little more about the private life and character of George VI than they did of that of the Mikado of Japan. Whether ultimately justifiable or not, the enthusiasm of the Coronation crowds was machine-made. It was "mass opinion"; that is, it was not opinion at all. People may move together, they may shout together; the one thing that they cannot do is to think together. Opinion exists only so far and so long as there is an intelligent appreciation of another point of view. Without this there may be passion, there may be prejudice; there is nothing worthy of being called "opinion". Dictatorships everywhere depend upon their appeal to this "mass opinion." Crafty statesmen trade upon it, honest ones dread it; and both know that its basis is ignorance and passion.

One cannot reflect on these easily created demonstrations of public enthusiasm without serious misgivings. And when they are allied with a resurgence of the most primitive religious superstitions the danger reaches its greatest strength. With the impudent avowal of the transformation of an "ordinary man" into an incarnation of divine wisdom, power and holy fear, I am not now concerned. But I am concerned with the susceptibility of huge masses of people—belonging to all classes of the population—to the power of suggestion. The ease with which a Prime Minister and an Archbishop convinced the public that a constitutional crisis had developed out of the amours of a King—particularly when one remembers how much of our "old nobility" owes its existence to the amours of past Kings, is al-

most amusing. But they believed this fable of a constitutional crisis, as easily as in October they believed that Edward was a great King, faithfully treading in his father's footsteps, only to believe in December that he was quite unfitted for the throne.

The people have been told that part of the glory of our throne is that it sets an example of domestic life to the whole of the nation. I am not saying a word against the domestic life of the Royal Family; it may be all that is said to be. About that I neither know nor care. But I do resent that statement as an implied slur on hundreds of thousands of families in this country. However good the domestic life of the Royal Family is, it is no more than a copy of the vast majority of homes in this country. The statement I am criticizing reverses the order of things, for the average British home was decent and admirable when, for at least six generations the domestic life of royalty was an open disgrace and a flaming scandal. It was the decency of the average British home that ultimately forced the Royal Family into conformity with it, and had that conformity not taken place, there would by now have been no Royal Family to educate or to reform. Let anyone ask himself at what period of British history, and for how long he would have wished the people to imitate the Royal Family in its domestic life, and he will agree with what I have said. The education of Kings has come from the people, and not that of the people from Kings.

It is the ease with which public opinion is swung this way and that, which almost frightens me when I reflect upon its potentiality for evil. If democracy is to last, it must be based upon something more enduring than mass-prejudice and a belief in the wisdom and power of god-endowed Kings. The creators of democracy were under no delusion on this head. They knew that real democracy must be based on intelligence, education, on a sense of personal dignity and individual strength of character. It would be

well for their descendants to be equally alert to such vital considerations.

* * *

Savage And Civilized.

Modern anthropology has made us familiar with the fact that the savage in civilized man is but skin deep. But there is a certain ambiguity about that word "savage." The scientist uses it in one sense; the ordinary man uses it in another and a different sense. The scientist means by "savage" no more than "primitive," and he measures people not by a time scale, but by a scale of culture. It is a value that cannot be expressed in terms of time. A people that lived five or six thousand years ago has been more civilized than many who are living to-day. The man living on one side of you may be centuries older than your neighbour on the other side. A King may be more primitive than a clown, the man driving a Rolls Royce car, speaking in perfect English, and dressed in the latest of fashionable clothing may indicate by the mascot he carries on his car and the ideas that lodge in his head that he is more nearly akin to the members of an African native tribe than he is to thousands of his contemporaries. The scientist deals with essentials, not with superficial differences. Those who took part in the Westminster Abbey ceremony of May 12, which involved the semi-deification of a King by a magical method that is thousands of years old, and who were impressed by its "solemnity," were by a scientific standard very primitive indeed.

On the other hand, the ordinary man when he talks of a "savage" people thinks of them as primitive certainly, but his "primitive" carries with it the notions of brutal, unthinking, illogical. And that is altogether wrong. Primitive mankind is not of necessity brutal—the bulk of them are far less deliberately brutal than are his descendants of to-day. He has fewer of the arts and comforts of civilised life, but he is also free from the influence of those inherited customs, beliefs and interests, which because they are

accumulated through many ages, are at constant war with one another, and which so often lead to the brutalities and hypocrisies of civilised life. Primitive man thinks, as does modern man, and his thoughts are determined as are the thoughts of all men, by the knowledge and the understanding he has of what is going on around him. And in that connexion his thoughts are actually more logical than those of modern man. He simply could not be guilty of the downright absurdities that characterize, say, an Archbishop. Both may be doing the same things, professing the same beliefs, but those of the "savage" are in accord with what is understood, those of the Archbishop represent a horrible mixture of bad logic and childish inferences.

* * *

Barbarism In High Places.

In the three articles that have preceded this one I have been trying to illustrate the persistence of a whole set of primitive ideas in our institution of the kingship. Not, be it noted, in the fact of calling a chief king, that is a matter of political expediency, but in the sanctifying of a King, by which sanctification, via a modern medicine-man, the King becomes a recipient of divine power and wisdom, and is converted into a "sacred" person—that is a "taboo" person. My intention in this article and in what follows is to demonstrate how very primitive is this belief and practice, and that not as a figure of speech, but as an actual fact. It goes directly back to the most primitive forms of "savage" life, and also if we can get rid of the fact that we live with the participants of that ceremony and exercise a small amount of imagination, we can easily fancy that we are looking on at the election of a chief of an uncivilized negro tribe who is being made chief solely because he is the visible incarnation of the tribal god. So far as our ceremony was accepted at its face value, they who did so, whether King or commoner, whether educated or uneducated, illustrated a case of social atavism. If they had, in-

stead of putting on the fantastic clothing, which seen in the streets would have caused roars of laughter, if they had thrown off all clothing except a loin-cloth, and if the King had, instead of promising the things he did such as acting justly, guarding the rights and privileges of the Church, etc., had been made to promise that he would send rain regularly and cause the crops to grow, and if the Archbishop had been daubed with paint and decked with feathers, all would only have been dressing for the part. Nothing can relieve the Coronation of its primitive magical nature, so far as the scientific mind is concerned, however "impressive" it may be to the primitive intelligence that was ready to shed tears over its "solemnity." Those, the majority probably, who went to see and enjoy a pageant, and who would have been as delighted had the same pageant been for any kind of object whatever, need not now be considered.

(Continued on page 148)

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PREMONITORY DREAMS

To The Editor, "Reason."

Dear Sir,

I have read with interest Mr. Rangachari's letter in the June issue of "Reason" under the above caption, which prompts me to give expression to my views of the matter.

At the outset I may state that in my opinion belief in premonitory dreams is pure superstition. There are no such dreams. What are supposed to be premonitory dreams turn out on critical analysis to be cases of coincidences or interpretations in the light of the events which are believed to have been foreshadowed by the dreams. And if, for the sake of argument, we concede that these dreams are actualities, we must also admit that they are quite useless. The admission of the existence of such dreams necessarily leads us to admit the existence of an intelligent Being who operates the workings of these dreams. Such a Being must be very cruel indeed to know about the impending calamity that is to befall a particular individual, to warn some friend or near relative of that person about the calamity, and not to avert that calamity. There is no sense in such warnings at all. And after all if such dreams are actualities, the phenomena should be of common occurrence, and every individual should have experienced them several times. On the contrary instances of the so-called premonitory dreams are very rare and quite unsatisfactory to establish any reasonable hypothesis.

The fact is, like so many other superstitions, the conception of a premonitory dream is purely a figment of our imagination. We dream of so many things which do not occur. It is purely reasonable to think that some one some day may dream of a thing which may be translated into an actuality later on. This should not lead us to jump to premonition or such other supernatural explanation of a purely accidental phenomenon. Those who are disposed to believe in this

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sort of thing frequently see in their dreams the explanations of the events which occur in future, but *always* after the events have taken place. It is easy to interpret a dream in several ways so that the facts of a particular event following the dream could easily be made to fit in with the circumstances of the dream. Instance No. 1 cited by Mr. Rangachari is an illustration in point. The wading through darkness has no actual connection with death, and the dreamer would not have given any thought to the dream had not death of the relation occurred to lend significance to the dream. The second illustration is susceptible of a simple natural explanation. The leaving behind of valuable articles by the poor man may have made him over-anxious about his possessions. It is a well known psychological fact that deep concentration on a subject induces dreams regarding it. The poor man's

dream certainly was the natural result of his anxiety about the safety of his belongings, and the subsequent loss of the property was of course a pure accident.

We must not rush to a supernatural explanation merely because a phenomenon appears to be a bit out of the ordinary. If we take the trouble to analyse

it we will find a natural explanation. And even if we do not, we have merely to suspend judgement about its explanation. We are not warranted to jump to the supernatural.

Yours, etc.
M. I. Ahmadi.
(Advocate, Ahmedabad).

THE EVOLUTION OF INDIAN POLITY

BY

M. V. V. K. RANGACHARI

Lord Zetland hath spoken: the *interim* Ministries are quite in order, in the view of the British and the Indian governments. There is vast authority for the opposite view, A. B. Keith including. This brings to mind the quotation from Mr. McCabe's memoir of Edward Clodd who held that 'there was no fixed standard of right and wrong by which the actions of men throughout are measured.' Clodd was an uncompromising evolutionist. Evolution works on the basis of relativity. What is true in the religious and ethical field of individual belief and personal conduct is equally applicable to the relation between the governing people and the governed. Mr. McCabe defines the position of the early pioneer (Mr. Clodd) of moral evolutionism, finding that "the bases of right and wrong lie in conduct towards one's fellows." The humanist will simply apply this test to the situation created by the forces of reaction and revolt obtaining in the country. The legal forms are merely adjectival verbiage, and diplomacy an opportunist cloak to cover the realities behind.

Constitutional law in its higher reaches is shaped by social philosophy, even as any science, including mathematics, is built on the foundation of the metaphysical postulate of reality. And as philosophy is but another name for true life, the test of wrong or right in social relation between peoples of different countries may only lie, in McCabe's words, "in conduct towards one's fellows."

Gandhiji owned the responsibility on the Indian side for the demand of an assurance from Britain that within the limited field of Provincial administration, the will of the overwhelming majorities in the democratic organisations may be permitted to express itself. The justification for the demand was sought in the political history of the party that has swept the polls in relation to the arm from which the transfer of responsibility is to be effected. As history is the best aid to understand morphology, the status of the Congress that had till lately been banned as an unlawful body, her leaders gaoled, and the mass-following treated to the lathi, to handle the portfolio's of even local business had first to be assured. It only betrayed at the worst a diffidence on the national side not so much on the ground of its representative capacity (which was stamped beyond question with the seal of electoral approval) but misgiving as to what figure is formed about itself in the eye of the other party. It should involve no moral adverse criticism if one were to assure oneself that another with whom he should open dealings should be called on to start with an expression of his own views concerning that one. It may have little ethical value, for it should ultimately depend on the course of dealing itself, and not on any preliminary estimates of the partners concerning each other, whether the business should continue or be set aside. At any rate it is no wrong conduct towards the other fellow, to revert to Mr. McCabe's way of putting it.

Next came the withholding of the assurance. Here is brought into aid the language of the statute. Legal grammarians have construed its clauses, which nowhere expressly prohibit the expression of confidence in the leaders of any party. The implication of stable administration resting on the support from the majority is on the other hand a sufficient indication, in favour of giving one. But grammar anyway should depend on the context, and unless other reasons press upon discretion, the excuse of stringent syntax should prove a feeble one. If such other reasons do press, it is certainly not right to the other fellow to display merely the rules of construction of sentences without letting him know the full real mind. The very fact that the simple "AYE" is kept out of the reach of the Indian people would seem to justify the suspicion with which the demand for such assurance at all arose. It has been put on the footing of a "gentleman's agreement" apart from all the trappings of political treaty or legal formalism, of which we may have any quantity in the air. But the one sovereign power that defended aerial bombing at Geneva had been also the very mentality that did not shrink from shocking the majority of the provinces in India into forms of administration unknown to democratic history and unsupported by the spirit as well as the letter of the law. Bombs on the frontiers may have their strategic justification. Science has given it to them. But there is an ideal loftier than destruction. Scientific humanism is an ever-expanding ideal, which may

never be overtaken by man's capacity. Indeed Lord Zetland's social philosophy has not overtaken the lofty ideal. Gandhiji, and in him India pursues the lofty humanistic ideals not overtaken elsewhere. As (Lady) Maud Simon concludes her "Constructive Rationalism" (Literary Guide, April, 1937, p. 71) "in this conception of human capacity being always behind the ideals lies" the spur to their pursuit. "If the existing order of political thought in England has not reached the ideal of Indian self-government, its very shortcomings prick the Indian mind to greater effort. For, as she observes "the rationalistic position by no means excludes faith in the ultimate triumph of good over evil, so far as this may be looked for in a catastrophic world, subject to natural law." And the formulation of that natural law between people and people need not be elevated into a "gentlemen's agreement". Even may it rest on the normal ground of understanding between man and man. If humanistic philosophy does not descend from the British political atmosphere on the Indian soil, may it not be said that the evolution of Indian polity had not been on the right lines? And whose is the responsibility for this mighty blunder of social ethics?

Cocanada,

12-4-1937.

(This letter was unfortunately delayed and the interim ministries are no longer in existence.—Ed.)

NOTES & HAPPENINGS

BY

Dr. C. L. D'AVOINE

On Sunday, the 25th of July last, about 20 Members of the Rationalist Association of India met at Messrs. Mongini Ltd. and sat together at lunch. Though the number was small, the function was a complete success. To begin with, the lunch was excellent, the gathering a select one and the speech delivered by Mr. M.

C. Chagla, B.A. (Oxon), Bar-at-Law was a fine one and was listened to with rapt attention. Mr. Chagla, in effect, dwelt on the importance of Rationalism and showed how it must influence all sphere of life—civic, religious and social. He stressed the fact that in a country like India, Rationalism was of the utmost im-

portance and he was sure that its cultivation would go a long way towards enlightening people on many things that require enlightenment. A summary of his speech is published in this issue.

* * *

Unfortunately India, for the moment, seems to be too much pre-occupied with politics to give a patient hearing to the claims of Rationalism and many do not appear to know clearly what it stands for.

Many who claim to be Rationalists make no effort for the cause; they are too self-centred to sacrifice a little of their time for it. It has long been remarked that many who were most enthusiastic when the Association was newly founded have cooled down in a most remarkable manner. At the lunch, the other day, many of its erst-while pioneers and staunch supporters were conspicuous by their absence. As usual the excuse was that unavoidable causes prevented them from being present. That's India all round.

* * *

Since the Archbishop of Canterbury has made his appeal to a "Return to Religion" some newspapers in this country have started running down Agnostics and Atheists. They attribute all the present troubles in the world to Freethinkers! Eternal vigilance is, indeed, necessary.

Evolution, the illustrated monthly Journal of Nature, published in America, like *Reason* here, had to suspend publication for sometime owing to want of financial support. Thanks to the mighty efforts of its Managing Editor, Mr. L. E. Katterfield, the paper has reappeared and promises to do well this time, for it has enlisted the support of many influential people. *Time*, the well known weekly American Magazine, devotes a long account in one of its recent issues to the great work that Mr. Katterfield has done in order to resuscitate his journal and he seems to have well succeeded. What has especially raised interest in that journal in America

is the apprehension that unless something is done to protect the teaching of biological science in America, religious fanatics and obscurantists will, in the long run, succeed in preventing the teaching of the same in most colleges in that country. Since the Dayton trial, the powers of darkness have moved heaven and earth to prevent the teaching of evolution and they have managed to get several states to pass legislation to this effect.

* * *

Time gives a long account how this is done. It would appear that so-called text books on Biology have been so eviscerated that one wonders whether they deal with that Science at all. What is more serious is that these bigots can always secure the services of so-called professors of science to teach whatever they wish in the name of science. People begin to recognize the great harm that such a state of things is causing to sound education in America; hence the reason why many are lending their support to *Evolution*. They realize that if these fanatics have their ways unopposed, the teaching of Science, especially Biology, will be completely stopped in many States of America. It would appear that already the harm they have done in opposing the march and progress of science is incalculable and it will take years to remedy the great harm done. It is gratifying to learn that some eminent Scientists have consented to be on the Scientific Advisory Board of the Journal viz:—Prof. Anton, J. Carlson, Physiology; Prof. Henry E. Crampton, Zoology; Prof. Wm. King Gregory, Vertebrate Paleontology. (He is the famous Curator of Comparative Anatomy, American Museum of Natural History). Prof. Paul B. Maun, Dr. Oscar Riddle, Genetics. (He is from the Carnegie Institution for Experimental Evolution.) There are also now eight Contributing Editors, all well-versed in the different sciences bearing on Evolution.

People in India will doubtless find *Evolution* very interesting and informative.

With reference to our remark in our last issue about the improper practice prevailing in this country of Sporting teams displaying religious labels, it is interesting to learn that a European Member of the I. C. S. somewhere in South India, according to the papers, recently reminded the Mahomedans of his district that they were Indians first and Mahomedans afterwards. He told them that to distinguish themselves by the religion they profess was objectionable and people in India ought not to do this.

* * *

Etienne Dolet, one of the martyrs of science was burnt at the stake at Lyons, France in 1545. Born on the 17th of August 1509, his crime was publishing "The Holy Scripture in the Vulgar Tongue" which was the title he adopted in translating the Bible. He also published heretical works and he dared to rebuke some monks of his time for their licentious and voluptuous character. He was also accused of eating meat on Lent. These were terrible crimes in the ages of the Church and Dolet could not of course, escape the hatred and the punishment of that "Holy Church."

* * *

The fight between the Nazis and the Catholic Church in Germany led to an interesting episode recently. It is known that Hitler is determined not to allow that Church to have its own way in Germany, and one of the efforts of the German Government in curtailing the great influence of that Church in that country is to deprive it of one of its most powerful methods of spreading its superstitions, and that is for the State to undertake the education of children. This has led to much bitterness and opposition. The Catholic authorities as usual are crying as loud as they can, and the words "unheard of persecution" are rending the air. Hitler is being denounced with all the vehemence priests are capable of when opposed.

Cardinal Mundelein of Chicago, for instance, recently denounced the dicta-

torial method of the German Government bitterly and described the serious struggle the Catholic Church is undergoing in Germany. Speaking before the Assembled Clergy of the Archdiocese of Chicago, the Cardinal attacked Hitler savagely. He called him "an Austrian paperhanger, and a poor one at that," and other ugly epithets.

* * *

Cardinal Mundelein particularly repudiated the serious accusations made by the German Government against many Franciscans monks and nuns for the crime of immorality and unnatural vices. The Cardinal said all this was pure lies as these religious people were known all over the world for their piety and sanctity; this, notwithstanding the fact that a good number of the accused confessed their crime before the Court of Law in which they were tried. He tried to make believe that these religious people were the victims of the hatred of Hitler and Dr. Goebbels against the Catholic religion.

This led to a fierce retort by Dr. Goebbels in a statement that was recently broadcasted all over Germany. Dr. Goebbels defied the Catholic to deny the grave charges made against those monks and nuns as they were tried before a Law Court and they could not deny the evidence led against them. Moreover, many confessed to gross immorality and unnatural vices to which, they said, they were addicted for many years.

* * *

Readers of Mr. Joseph McCabe's Book, "The Papacy in Politics to-day," must have noticed that a reference is made to that serious charge against many of these Catholic monks and nuns in Germany at pages 76 to 79. Mr. McCabe says that in view of what has transpired in the Law Courts, the voluntary confessions made by many of the accused, it would be hard for Catholic propagandists to convince the world that it is all a pure lie and a conspiracy to harm the Roman Catholic Church in Germany. Dr. Go-

bbels also says the same thing. It is certainly remarkable that Hitler, himself, owing to the impendng Olympic Games that were to take place in Berlin when the trial was going on, ordered the newspapers not to publish the Law Court's proceedings as he was anxious that such dirty things should not be known abroad. He was mindful of those foreigners who would attend the Olympic Games. It is also significant that one of the most respectable newspapers in Germany, the **Berliner Tageblatt**, published long details of this sordid affair from June 23rd to July 21st 1936, until Hitler ordered it to suppress this news. It is also known that the Catholic propagandists did their utmost to get the news suppressed abroad with a good deal of success.

* * *

Interest was created in the correspondent columns of two local newspapers in a controversy on the practice of Witchcraft or Voodooism in Salsette. The controversy was started by a Salsettian Catholic who opined that the practice was widespread among his co-religionists and he appealed to the authorities, both Government and Ecclesiastical, to put a stop to this. When some correspondents pointed out that there was nothing strange in the fact that some Catholics

should practice witchcraft, since they are strong believers in the powers of the Devil and this knowledge was imparted to them by the priests, at once the cry was raised that these correspondents took advantage of this disclosure to attack Roman Catholics! Needless to say that these howlers were easily silenced when they were reminded that their Church teaches nothing but the struggle between God and the Devil and all its practices and ceremonies were in effect devised to protect the faithful against that Archenemy of God,—Satan.

Another controversy which created great interest and invited some spirited correspondence from people belonging to different communities, was the charge that the Catholic Church teaches that man owes no consideration to the lower animals and therefore could be cruel or not to them since these animals were created for his use and enjoyment.

A local Catholic Weekly tried to defend the Church; but its advocacy and explanation fell flat. That paper was evidently dealing with well informed people who could retort and not with its usual readers who generally swallow everything they see in print in Catholic Journals.

R. A. I. LUNCH

Mr. M. C. Chagla on "Rationalism and Civil Liberties in India".

It was a small but select gathering of members and their friends of the Rationalist Association of India at the Lunch at Mongini's Bombay on July 25. The chair was occupied by Dr. C. L. D'Avoine. Mr. M. C. Chagla was the guest of the Association.

Amongst those present were:—

Mr. J. R. Labelle, Prof. R. D. Karve, Dr. & Mrs. V. R. Khanolkar, Dr. A. S. Erulkar, Miss M. Benjamin, Dr. G. Coelho, Dr. C. R. Athavle, Mr. E. L. D'Avoine, Mr. J. Ezekiel, Mr. S. Aptekar, Mr. S. B. Rath, and a few others.

Dr. C. L. D'Avoine

Chairman: I regret to announce that our Association has lost a very valuable and sincere member in the person of the late Mr. Austin Paul D'Costa who died on the 29th of June last. On the very day that his death occurred, he visited me and complained that he was not well. I advised him to take complete rest. He sat down and chatted for a while and expressed the hope that we would meet today at the Lunch. The poor fellow died a couple of hours after expressing such a hope. Mr. D'Costa was a member of the Association from its onset and was

a member of the R. P. A. of London for more than 25 years. He quite unobtrusively helped our Association to the best of his ability and his enthusiasm was always unflagging. Our deep sympathies are with his brother, the only living member of his family.

I shall now request Mr. Chagla to speak.

**MR. M. C. CHAGLA, B.A. (Oxon),
Bar-at-Law.**

Mr. M. C. Chagla:

I am very grateful to you for inviting me to be in your midst this afternoon. When your enthusiastic Secretary approached me to come and speak at this Lunch the first question I asked him was whether I had to speak before lunch or after lunch. You may not realise the importance of the distinction but it undoubtedly has a considerable importance both from the point of view of the speaker and of the audience. When you are asked to speak before lunch you are likely to be short, pithy and precise, because you want to have done with your speech as soon as possible so as to tackle the good fare that is waiting for you. If you are speaking after lunch a good fare is already inside you and there is a tendency to be garrulous and long-winded, especially if you have had a good lunch as I have had, and you are enjoying a good cigar, as I am, which has been given to me by my friend, Dr. Erulkar.

The subject I am asked to speak on, this afternoon, is 'Rationalism and civil liberties.' I might tell you that I had absolutely no choice over the subject. Your Secretary just told me that I had to speak on it, and, therefore, in a sense, this is a command performance.

The way I propose to look at the subject is this. I shall first deal with rationalism, then with civil liberties and finally the combination of the two.

Now, what is rationalism? I do not know what the two learned Vice-Presidents between whom I am sitting think about it, but according to me rationalism

is that attitude of mind which places reason in a predominant position in all affairs of life. I said predominant position and not the sole position to the exclusion of every other consideration. Just as a man cannot live by bread alone, so also he cannot live by reason alone. Faith, emotion and sentiment must play their due part in life. You may subordinate them to reason but you must allow them their full play. Life would be a very cheap and tawdry thing if it was governed and controlled only by reason. Some of our best actions are actuated not so much by reason as by emotion and sentiment.

I admit that in our country there is a special need for emphasising rationalism because that is a quality which is very much at a discount here. You find our public life, more often than not, swayed by sentiment rather than by reason. Some of the most important decisions in recent years have been arrived at by considerations which completely leave reason out of the picture. Take, for instance, the Poona Pact. No man has greater respect and admiration for Gandhiji than I have. That wonderful old man is one of the greatest men living in the world to-day, but still as rationalists we must not forego the luxury of criticising even him, and when we find that an important political pact is arrived at more by fasting than by ratiocination we are entitled to say that whatever you might think of the conclusion the method is all wrong, and in this case as it happens, even the conclusion was wholly wrong. It is difficult to conceive of a worse mess than was made by this pact. I am not here to consider its various provisions, but it is sufficient only to remind you of the great and grave injustice that was done to the Bengal Hindus under this pact. Then look to our social life. The two institutions of which we are, and ought to be always, ashamed of are caste and purdah, and they both exist because people refuse to think for themselves.

Now what are civil liberties? Civil liberties are the liberty of speech, the

liberty of the press, and the liberty of association. I have not mentioned the liberty of thought which is the parent of all these liberties, because no state and no human agency can control a man's thoughts. But where the question of human liberties comes in is when a man has thought for himself, wishes to give expression to his thought either by getting on to a platform and delivering a speech, or writing a letter to the press, or inviting a few people to come and sit down with him and help him to work out the logical consequences of his thoughts. If you consider the history of civilization you will find that civilization is nothing else than the fact that men right down the ages have given expression to their thoughts in different ways, and those who succeeded them have worked further on those thoughts and the torch once lighted has been kept burning and has been carried forward from hand to hand, from generation to generation. Our scientific progress is entirely due to the fact that men have not kept their thoughts to themselves, but thoughts have been accumulated and each generation has had the advantage of knowing what the previous generations have thought on a particular subject. So also in art. We would still have been in the dark ages if we did not have the visible proof of the thoughts of men in literature, painting, music and architecture. Therefore, civil liberties are not merely the elementary rights of citizens, but they are absolutely vital to the existence and development of society itself.

To-day the question of civil liberties assumes a peculiar importance because you find in the world a conflict of two opposite ideas, dictatorship and democracy. On the one hand you have the idea that the state exists for the people, that the state is merely the method whereby the people wish to govern themselves. On the other hand you have the idea that the people exist for the state, and that the state is something outside and independent of the people. In democracy, as the state

exists for the people, the more rights and liberties the people have, the greater and nobler the state would be. But where you have the opposite idea, naturally the state cannot and does not tolerate any liberties or rights on the part of the people, and you find that civil liberties are sub-merged for the glorification of the state. The state must speak with one voice. There must be complete uniformity, and any diversity is not only discountenanced but deliberately opposed and resisted. You have the instances of dictatorship in the totalitarian states like Germany and Italy, and I need hardly tell you, who are all students of world affairs, at what a sad discount civil liberties are in these states. In our own country we have neither dictatorship, nor democracy. You have a bureaucracy, and a bureaucracy is as anxious as any dictatorship to preserve to itself the sole monopoly of thinking on political matters on behalf of all the people which it is called upon to govern. The British Government here does not plead guilty to the charge of being called a bureaucracy. It calls its rule a paternal rule and arrogates to itself the position and status of a trustee working on behalf of the vast millions of India. They tell us that we are the beneficiaries but we are still minors and therefore we do not know what is good for us, and we must leave to our trustees to decide what should be done on all matters which affect the government of the country. So in India especially it is necessary that we ought to be very jealous in guarding and looking after such liberties as we have got and seeing that no further encroachments are made upon those liberties.

Now, when I come to think of the connection there is between rationalism and civil liberties, I find that the Rationalist Association ought to be as much interested in the civil liberties of the people as any one else. There can be no rule of reason if civil liberties are suppressed, because the value of civil liberties is not confined to the political sphere alone. Even in non-political matters there must

exist civil liberties in order that rationalism can prevail. Take, for instance, religion. There you find civil liberties are curtailed, not very much by Government, but by another body of autocrats, viz., the priests, and this body of men arrogate to themselves the same rights and powers as the Government does in the political sphere. They want you to take for granted whatever they lay down as the law, they discourage any attempt at reasoning or thought and they do their best to make of religion a mystery which it would be a sacrilege for any eyes but theirs to look at in all its majesty. To mention only one instance, you will remember how priests all through history have fought against the scriptures being thrown open and made available to the ordinary man. You know what a revolution was brought about in Europe when the Bible was translated, because then the ordinary man could read and think for himself and come to a conclusion whether what the priests told him to do was justified by what he thought the word of God.

In social matters also it is necessary that a man must enjoy in full his civil liberties, because there is such a thing as tyranny of society which is sometimes a greater tyranny than the tyranny of Government. Most things we do we do because our forefathers did them, and because society expects us to do them and any attempt on our part to do differently would be immediately met by social ostracism. In India if we consider the customs which regulate our marriages and funeral ceremonies you will find that there is nothing to justify them except the fact that everybody else does it and this has been done for generations past. Now, it is the duty of rationalists to fight these customs and conventions which have become out-worn and which are no longer suited to the present conditions and the time. But this is only possible if men are given the liberty to speak, to agitate in the press, and to form associations. I know there is no law preventing them from doing so, but as I said before this Association and

bodies like these ought to safe-guard against society coming down upon those unfortunate men who want to make innovation in this regard. After all when you look at the history of the world you find that the greatest men that history makes mention of, are men who were non-conformists, who refused to conform to the standard, of their times, who refused to bend their knee to the customs and conventions which society had sanctified, and who refused to say 'Yes' to everything which their fellowmen deemed to be the eternal verities of life.

I think my prognostication has come true, and as apprehended the good lunch has made me rather garrulous, and it is time I brought my remarks to a close.

In conclusion I wish to say that there ought to be a complete alliance between the Rationalist Association and the Civil Liberties Union, because they are counterparts of each other. I think every good rationalist should be a stout defender of civil liberties and a defender of civil liberties must be a good rationalist.

I thank you, Ladies and Gentlemen, for your hospitality and for the patient hearing you have given me.

Dr. V. R. Khanolkar.

Dr. Khanolkar said that he had been asked to speak a few words and particularly to thank the guest of the occasion, Mr. Chagla. He said that anything he could add to the brilliant exposition of the subject by Mr. Chagla could only spoil the excellent effect on those present. However he would like to say that rationalism in every day affairs of life was nowhere more needed than in this country, where emotion and sentiment played such an important role in the words and deeds of the leaders and their followers.

Even in a Society like this, the activities and the membership seemed to be guided by emotional considerations. Sometimes there was a great influx of members and at others a gradual waning of activity for no apparent reason. This Society had in the last few years passed through a very critical, or shall it be said,

a moribund stage. It is hoped that these lunches and frequent meetings which aim at bringing the members together would help it through its convalescence. It was a hopeful sign that a band of young and enthusiastic workers are trying their utmost to put the Society on its legs and all those who were present wished them every success in their endeavour.

Mr. Chagla was present as a guest that afternoon, but it was hoped that next time he would be present as an

active member.

The Secretary then thanked all present and expressed the hope that such functions would be more frequent and better attended and consequently create greater contact among the members.

Letters and messages were received from Mr. K. T. Chandy, Mr. Milton David, Mr. A. M. Suterwalla and others regretting their inability to attend the lunch and wishing the Association success.

(Continued from page 138)

God-Boxes.

In giving the evidence for what has been said, it will save repeated references if I advise all who wish to follow the subject further than these articles to study the following works. These are Sir James Frazer's *Lectures on the History of the Kingship* (1905), *Kingship*, by A. M. Hocart (1927), *Councillors and Kings*, by the same author (1936), *The Magic Art*, by Frazer (1911), and *Christian Myth and Ritual*, by Professor E. O. James (1933). If these books do not lead to further study (there are a large number of works dealing more or less elaborately with the subject) then that person had better confine himself to a study of those weekly journals that manage to give a lot of information without saying anything worth bothering about.

The natives of Mangia (South Pacific) have a name for these god-possessed chiefs or kings. They call them "God-boxes," a term which shows the direct logical nature of the primitive mind. Our Archbishop would use the much more tortuous phrase, "filled with the power of the Holy Ghost." It means no more than does the native god-box, but it is valuable because obscure. It must have come as a revelation to many when Sir James Frazer, dismissing as an idle speculation the popular belief that the primitive chief owed his position to being the

strongest and bravest man of the tribe, made it quite plain that the divinity of the chief, headman, or king (the wording matters little) was a common feature of all primitive communities. In passing we may note this as another tribute to the prescience of Herbert Spencer who, in his *Principles of Sociology*, opened a new chapter in scientific sociology by emphasizing the formative influence of ideas in primitive life.

We are not now concerned with the origin of the belief in the supernatural; the main consideration is that all over the world among primitive communities, the chief or king begins as an incarnation of the tribal god, and also it is to the deep-seated nature of this belief that the office of a king is surrounded to-day in this country with a reproduction of the primitive mummery such as the world has just witnessed. The magical nature of kingship, its "sacred" and "sanctified" character, is very obvious when we are dealing with existing primitive communities that have no object in "rationalizing" their beliefs and customs, but the relation of the Coronation of an English King to the Fijian and other primitive ceremonies of anointing the chief is quite clear to the scientific student.

* * *

How Kings Began.

I can now give but a few specimens of the truth of what has been said, and will commence with the more primitive

peoples. The natives of Futuma (South Pacific) believe that their god resides in the person of their king. From this they draw the conclusion that the king, being god, can do no wrong. This has to us a quite "constitutional" ring when we remember that it is part of our own custom. In Tanatoa after the king has been duly anointed he is worshipped, consulted as an oracle, and prayers are offered to him. This is a very common practice throughout the islands. At his "sanctification" the king is given a "sacred" girdle by the priest, which at once elevates the king to a god. We again come close to this in our own service when, after the Archbishop clothes the king, all the nobles promise him worship. The Archbishop promises him *service* in return for the king promising to secure the rights and privileges of the Church. It is a case of a Roland for an Oliver. Among the Igbos of Nigeria, when a king is installed, all the prayer sticks are given over to him, the official surrender their wands of office and stand bear-headed before him. After the King has been "sanctified" the wands of office are returned, their power having been renewed by the god, the prayer-sticks are given back and the sub-chiefs put on their head coverings and cry out a salute to the King—now a god. I need not emphasize the closeness with which this follows the Westminster ceremony. It is a recognition that everything comes from the god-king. An Igbo who had come direct from Nigeria would have followed with the fullest appreciation the Coronation of George VI. He would have witnessed the same thing in his native haunts. The ancient Sumerian Kings were born of gods. In the period of Greek life represented by the Homeric poems the kings were clearly divine. The early Babylonian Kings were treated as gods. In official theory the Mikado of Japan is still a descendant of the gods, although educated Japanese will "rationalize" the divinity of the monarch much as our king-worshippers act with regard to the semi-divinity of George VI. In each case the theoretically divine king has

become a "symbol," but of what he is a symbol God only knows. But in these cases any formula serves to hide even from believers what are the actual facts. The chief Lama of Tibet is also a "god-box," the god passing from one Lama to another. This last feature is common, but not universal, with primitive peoples, and we get here the real significance of our own formula, "The King is dead, long live the King." The man is unmistakably dead, the god simply passes into the body of the new monarch. All this would be quite clear to our Fijian visitor if he was reading the Coronation Service in his native tongue. In the Colonial Office at Peking, there is a list of 160 incarnates who have been during past centuries licensed by the State. (Frazer, *Lectures*, p. 160). Our own list of "sanctified" kings looks very juvenile by the side of that of the Chinese.

Among the negroes of the Upper Nile the chief is both medicine-man and king. The kings of Egypt were always gods, says Foucart, and in Egypt, "we find ourselves in the presence of a conception of monarchy based solely upon the assimilation of the king to the gods"; and another authority, Moret, says "the Kings of Egypt exhausted all the possible conceptions of divinity." At Thebes a woman slept in the temple with the god-king, and the child born of the two was worshipped as an incarnate, just as centuries later there reappeared in the New Testament the same story of the birth of a child from the union of a god and a woman. Robertson Smith, in his epoch-marking *Religion of the Semites* (1889) points out that the identification of the god with the king was general. Had Robertson Smith written at a later date he would most probably have stated the fact in terms much closer to later research. But he does give a list of Semitic communities, each with its own god-king. Of the Melanesians, Codrington, the chief authority on these peoples, says that the whole power of the chiefs rests "upon the belief in their supernatural power derived from spirits

or ghosts with whom they had intercourse." And in the Bible the first king is anointed by the priests, and the king rules over "my people" in the name of the god. Here, again, in that expression we have the belief that everything comes from the gods, and to the people through the god-king. We have an echo of this in the king's expression, "my army", "my navy", the "King's courts of law," etc. These are taken as a mere figure to-day, but to the scientific investigator they are as illuminating in their reference as are rudimentary animal structures to the scientific biologist. And like these rudimentary bodily structures, our social ones may represent an element of danger and demoralization in their diminished and often perverted functioning.

* * *

The "Savage" To-day.

Dig where we will into the history of humanity we get the same evidence. The King does not begin as the best or bravest or wisest man of the tribe, and in this feature the kingship everywhere has remained absolutely faithful to its origin. The King develops from the medicine-man, and becomes, in due course, the incarnation of tribal supernaturalism. From neolithic man worshipping his chief because of his supposed power with the tribal gods, or because he is both god and man at the same time, down to the Archbishop of Canterbury pouring "holy oil"

over the King, and by means of his incantations, giving the King a power and wisdom and fear that he had not previously possessed, the chain of evidence is unbroken. There is absolutely no difference between the Melanesian chief sitting in the centre of a circle of his sub-chiefs while the chief priest transforms him into a god-king, and the crowd of English peers standing round the King while the Archbishop goes through substantially the same performance, and for, avowedly, the same purpose as was there in the most primitive, and is present to-day with the least civilised of existing peoples. There is no difference but one, and that is the feeling of pity that humanity has developed so slowly, and of contempt that so many who know better can be induced to play a part in so stupid a ceremony.

But, as I have said, the distinction between the original service with primitive humanity and that of to-day is that the "savage" of ten thousand or more years ago acted according to his lights. The modern "savage" is acting against what is known to all who take the trouble to learn. The one is a deed done in the dark; the other is an offence against the light. We have now to inquire why the early savage acted as he did, and to consider the reactions on civilized life of this perpetuated savagery.

REASON

(Estd. 1931)

The Journal of The Rationalist
Association of India.
5-12, Queen's Road,
Bombay.

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*All contributions should be addressed to the
Editor "REASON" Jagjivan Mansions, 13, New
Bhatwadi, Bombay 4, and should reach the editor on
or before the 15th of each month.*

*The writers of the articles in this journal are
themselves responsible for the views expressed and do
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*For Advertisement rates etc. Please apply to the
Business Manager "REASON" care of the Rationa-
list Association of India. Concession rates to member.*

*Subscription for "Reason" Re. 1/8 & Foreign
3 Shillings annually.*

SECRETARIAL COMMENTS

Six months have passed since the Association restarted its activities. We thank all those who have again shown the interest they have in the cause.

But we have to regretfully admit that the membership has not yet reached the figure it had, a few years ago. It is also disappointing to note that many of

our esteemed members to whom we owe all that the Association has achieved till now and to whom in fact we are indebted for the very existence of the R.A.I. have—or at least seem to have—ceased to take interest in the cause.

Everywhere, at present, we observe the onslaught on Reason, and people are swayed by forces which threaten to strike at the very root of progress.

But far from this making us pessimistic it should urge greater vigilance on our part to guard the liberties that have been won for us. "Eternal vigilance is indeed the price of all liberty," and "those who expect to reap the blessings of freedom must, like men, undergo the fatigues of supporting it."

Had it not been for those who were at the helm of the R.A.I. in the beginning; had it not been for their unselfish sacrifice of time energy and money for this the "best of causes," many of us who are now making efforts to secure a firm foundation for the R.A.I. to-day, would never have been rescued from the clutches of superstition.

It is quite plain that no cause can succeed if only a few of those who cherish that cause work for it. And if those few cease to work when others come forward to work for it, small chance there is indeed for success.

We must make a united effort so that even if we fail we can say that we have done our best.

We cannot succeed if we are not organised. Even the greatest orator can-

not do anything if his colleagues do not help him to secure a platform from which to speak. Let us therefore strengthen the R.A.I. so that it can champion those who are prepared to fight for the liberty of thought and speech.

We may safely say that the success of Freethought in India in a great measure depends on the strengthening of the Rationalist Association of India, the only freethought organisation in this country.

If all our members make up their minds to help the Association once again at the cost of a little self sacrifice for at least two years we need have no anxiety as to the future of the R.A.I.

Restarting the journal alone has meant a great deal of work and we have to do our best to keep it up.

A brief report of our activities, during the last six months is being sent to members.

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There is no wealth but life

—Emerson.

REASON

THE JOURNAL OF THE RATIONALIST ASSOCIATION OF INDIA

"TO COMBAT ALL RELIGIOUS AND SOCIAL BELIEFS AND CUSTOMS THAT CANNOT STAND THE TEST OF REASON AND TO ENDEAVOUR TO CREATE A SCIENTIFIC AND TOLERANT MENTALITY AMONG THE PEOPLE OF THIS COUNTRY." *"Objects of the Rationalist Association of India."*

New Series.

SEPT.—OCT. 1937

No. 8-9.

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THE GOD-MAKER

BY

R. D. KARVE

Religious teachers have always been past-masters in the art of advertisement. A well-known advertising trick consists in tacking an advertisement on to a familiar phrase of every-day use, as in "Good morning, have you used Pears' Soap?" A similar trick on a much more extensive scale has been used by religious teachers by capturing all the best things in the world, making them appear to be a part of religion, and then taking advantage of this spurious connection to proclaim religion as the most sublime and the most beautiful thing in the world. Some of the most beautiful sites in the world have been occupied by famous temples and mosques and pagodas and churches. Some of the most beautiful music is religious music. Some of the most beauti-

ful architecture is religious architecture. Even love, the most soul-stirring emotion known to man, has been made to subserve the ends of religion. Love without the permission of the priest has to be platonic love. The registrar may now take the place of the priest in some cases, but this is only a step in the general retreat which has been the fate of religion in face of the advance of science.

But as we have seen, religious teachers are very astute. Seeing that science has become a centre of admiration before which religion has to beat a retreat, they are trying to make out that Science itself proclaims the same truths as religion has taught to the world. And unfortunately, some half-baked scientists are helping them to do so. I am advisedly call-

ing them half-baked scientists in spite of the fact that some of them are great names in their own branches.

Let us consider this a little more closely. The fundamental religious attitude is Faith, while the fundamental scientific attitude is scepticism. No doubt, even in science, we do often believe statements without verification, but this is only a matter of convenience, because it would be impossible for everybody to verify every scientific truth. But in science, nobody is obliged to take statements on faith and students are even encouraged to verify things for themselves. In religion, doubt becomes a sin. Considering this fundamental difference, scientists ought to be on their guard against any attempts of religion to make use of scientific half-truths for its own ends. Religion cannot help catching at straws. It started by opposing science with all its might, burning scientific discoverers when it could, and only now trying to make friends with science when it cannot help it. But can science make friends with religion? Not if it stands for Truth as it is supposed to. Faith is a lie, because it makes you proclaim belief in something of which you are at least not sure. In Science, if you are not sure of a thing, you say that you are not sure, you do not proclaim your faith in it. Of course if you are sure, it is not faith, it is certainty.

Any so-called scientist who is not steeped in the scientific method, in the scientific attitude of doubt, does not deserve the name of scientist. He may be a worker in the scientific field and may even have made important discoveries in that field, but so long as he finds that the scientific method should be confined to the laboratory, so long as he dare not carry it wherever he goes, he is not a genuine scientist. He is only a labourer, he is not imbued with the scientific spirit.

Prominent among such half-baked scientists as I call them, are two distinguished names: Sir James Jeans and Sir Arthur Eddington, who have been lending their support to the existence of God, though some may reasonably doubt if it

is the same as the Biblical or any other known god. But to theologians it does not matter. Any straw is better than none. So they seize upon whatever god scientists may support and proclaim that it is their own. Even if the Book of Genesis is not proved, or is disproved, they may perhaps even be willing to give it up and stick to whatever portion of the Bible they can.

Let us examine briefly the arguments of these two god-makers. Sir Arthur Eddington has been trying to bolster up the theory of Free will by a consideration of the behaviour of atoms, electrons and protons. It seems under present conditions impossible to foretell the motion of an atom under given circumstances, as the motion of large bodies can be foretold. Eddington suggests that the atom may not be subject to any laws at all and moves as it pleases by "free will". From this he infers that man also has free will, apparently obtained by influencing the atoms in the brain to take one particular course out of the possible alternatives. The Principle of Indeterminacy, which is about ten years old, says that it is impossible to determine with precision both the position and momentum of a particle; there will be a margin of error in each and the product of the two errors is constant. The margin of error involved is very small, and what may not be possible to-day may become possible to-morrow, and theories of time and space being under revision, judgment has in any case to be suspended in such cases as these. There is nothing to prove that matter is not subject to laws, even if we are not able for the time being to determine them accurately.

It has also been pointed out that the word "determined" is ambiguous. It may mean "ascertained" accurately, or "caused". Now it has only been proved that the behaviour of atoms cannot be ascertained accurately, and it is a mere quibble to say that it is not caused by natural laws. All our inferences of any kind are based on the supposition of the constancy of natural laws. Otherwise

no logic and no science would be possible, and even an inference as to the existence of God would be unreliable. This kind of naive reasoning may do for theologians, not for scientists, and this is why I have been calling Eddington a half-baked scientist. Free will disposes of all laws, not only those which may be inconvenient.

Sir James Jeans on the contrary infers God from the fact that the world does obey natural laws. For him, God is a mathematician. According to him the world is an experiment made by God. That God should be in need of experiments would show that he is not the Omniscient Being that theologians proclaim him to be. Otherwise what could He learn from experiments? Perhaps he takes pleasure in seeing his laws verified, as one would take pleasure in playing music even when one knows it thoroughly. Anyhow, it does not lend any dignity to God to suppose that he is in need of amusing himself by making geometrical models like a schoolboy, instead of meditating for ever on highly important matters. Of course it is not easy to imagine any subject for him to think about when he knows everything already.

Eddington also gives an argument from Thermodynamics. This law states that world is running down, though of

course this is not the wording of the law. The exact law is that when two bodies of different temperatures are brought near each other, the hotter one would cool down and the colder one would get warmer, until they are of equal temperature. A similar law was found to apply to all forms of energy. This is an equalizing process, or, as Bertrand Russell calls it, a tendency towards democracy. This is an irreversible process and, in the past, energy must have been more unevenly distributed than now, and continuing this process backwards, we must come to a point when energy was distributed as unevenly as possible, and there could obviously have been no moment before that, if this law has been valid all the time. The world must therefore have begun at that time, and this leads to the conclusion that it must have been created at that time, or at least wound up. And who could wind it up but God? Bertrand Russell answers this as follows:

"Is the Creator amenable to the laws of physics or is He not? If he is not, He cannot be inferred from physical phenomena, since no physical law can lead to Him; if He is, we shall have to apply the second law of thermodynamics to Him and suppose that He also had to be created at some remote period. But in that case, he has lost his *raison d'être*."

RELIGION AND ETHICS

BY

M. V. V. K. RANGACHARI

The comparative study of religion, theology, and philosophy alone will afford a correct perspective to enable the formation of a view of life in true proportions. If the picture is not to be distorted, neither elongated, nor stretched overmuch breadthwise, nor rendered ugly by over-focussing at immaterial fronts, it is the scientific sense in man that must present truth at its best.

Of all the views representing the picture of the universe, none is admitted-

ly the complete picture. The universe and man's place therein is the one central fact about them all. "There is nothing higher than man" says the **Mahabharata**, "**Na manushat sheshtha taram hi kinchit**" (XII, 300-20).

In all the approaches to the problem of life, in Hinduism, Buddhism, Christianity and Islam, the primary objective throughout has been human perfection, a better shaping of man's intellect, an ennobling of his outlook on life, the sub-

limation of his feelings, and the satisfaction of the desire, somehow, to bridge the chasms of his wants, failures and shortcomings. That is always as it should be. For, religion is the innermost urge that tends to human advance.

The fatalistic attitude preached by religions however, injures its own victim, the dreamer who mistakes the battlefield of life for the lounging room of indifference. The dictum, moreover, that deathbed conversion effects miraculous results has grave consequences. This phase of religious belief is not peculiar to the Roman Catholic Church with its institution of the confessional and the administering of the extreme unction which is supposed to save the soul when it leaves the body. The belief is commonly held in eschatologies the world over that such eleventh-hour rites have efficacy in redeeming the failure of the closing life. As a means of impressing the value of faith on the faithless, an over-statement of the case may appear somewhat excusable. But to induce an assurance that to be a well-behaved conformist in the dying hour compensates for the evil-doing throughout the long years of active life is to set a premium upon vice, and to whet the greed of the confessor. Genuine repentance has its own value, but we can only appraise it psychologically, as leading to the improvement of character during life. There is no way of determining whether the deathbed penitent is better or worse off for it. The better view seems certainly to be that, as death is an uncertain event, the injunction to do right at death covers the whole period of life, rather than the scientifically indefensible proposition that the momentum of an entire career may be altered in its course by a man's nodding his head before a priest at a time when no power to act in it is left. The Gita brings this out. In II, 72, and VII, 30, it refers to the attainment of true knowledge and Brahmi Sthiti (the rest in Brahman) at the time of departure. The explanation follows in VIII, 5 to 7. "He who casts off the body thinking of

Me at the end, enters my being. There is no doubt (Stanza 5) the last thought at death determines the nature of the further abode, in relation to which progress is made. (Stanza 6) *therefore at all times think on Me alone and fight.* With experience and rational discrimination centred on Me, without doubt, thou shalt realise Me. (Stanza 7)". I emphasise the words "therefore, at all times" which show that to be hopeful of doing good at death implies the preparedness to meet death during the entire period of the preceding life. And reading the Gita, in the same light as I did the Mukundamala, in its application to a humanist faith, I claim that one who meets death at that, finds an immortality different in colour from the religious one, but none the less real and intense.

It is thus as much a perverse reading of religion to think of postponing rightful conduct to the last hour, as the overstressed concern for the period beyond life to the exclusion of its practical side. The founders themselves knew what they were about, and put forth weights in the swinging balance that temporal and social variations required. The objective had throughout been the equipoise, the balancing of the individual talent, and the drawing forth of the genius of society to advantage.

To sleep like the top is to be at the acme of the gyration. The steadiness and quiet is so perfect that the top does not appear to move. Once it begins to totter, the tipsy movement increases till it falls. The Yogic balance is like the sleep of the top. It is the acme of its gyration. The pulls and pushes of life bear on it constantly to make it totter, and once the tipsy movement commences, gravity does the rest. A faultless balanced movement is the only guarantee of progress during life and perfection in the end. The equipoise of life is for life's benefit, and not for the merit of death. The mechanism of the universe hangs on balance, and every

disruptive force is the outcome of the same effort to maintain the balance. The landslide is as much the result of balancing forces as the later settlement of the earth nearby. So, with volcanic eruptions, cataclysms, the blasting of stars or planets into dust, the movement goes on in one way until the growth assumes a proportion incompatible with the maintenance of the equipoise any longer. Then, the disruption and soon the gap is adjusted by the shifting centres of gravity. "Even here on earth, everything is realized by those whose mind retains balance, for the Eternal is incorruptible and balanced. Wherefore they are established in the Eternal" (Gita, V, 19). The utmost physical reading of this does not offend the rationality of the statement. The eternal balance is automatically self-adjustive, and they who are able to withstand the impulses of affection and repulsion maintain the harmony of life.

To doubt or deny the governance of the universe by design and personality is not the same thing as throwing causal connection overboard. In fact, the religionist wants in the undercurrent of his thought to do away with Karma, the religious application of the causality principle, by introducing the element of chance, caprice and accident in the guise of unexplained divine intervention. The postulate of God is thus reduced to the interposition of an extraneous power between the doer and the deed, so that the ordinary law of gravitation may not draw the consequence on the head of the person whose hand threw up the stone. Even Jaimini, who emphasises ritual and the observance of the Vedic Dharma, sees in a way the superfluity in the assumption of Isvara (God) when the works themselves should automatically produce their good and evil fruit.

Faiths which invest the object of devotion with personality tend to strive to please Him, in order to reach near Him, to attain Moksha. This involves adaptation of means to ends, and the effort to reach these ends. Their followers have

specific perspectives, are concerned with the fruit of their action, the sociological goods that they strive after. They divide themselves automatically as it were into classes and castes determined by the degree of fitness to work for the preconceived ends. Their actions fall, according to the classification in the *Gita*, into the Rajasic (active) category. They cannot reach the balanced stage (Satva), the equilibrium that is unmindful of the fruit of action, but has the clear knowledge of what ought to be done in duty. They are ever motivated by the profit and loss account. The machinery of industrial capitalism lies in this stage. There is yet the lower stage, the Tamasic, the destructive, blind force of the machine-gun and poison-gas. Even the frenzy of mass production in Soviet Russia does not tend to the equipoise of the Satvic culture. True, the preliminary for the inauguration of balanced life is the availability of the everyday needs of life to the individual without effort. If human talent is released from the day-to-day pursuit of bread-winning care, an economic order that could have accomplished this would have found its compensation in the more fruitful achievement of the creative genius. But the attempt to release such talent, in the competitive spirit, with a view to outdo the achievements of others is not duty to humanity performed in the spirit of sacrifice of the fruit of action, but on the other hand is work turned out at high pressure, leaving the impress of its own effects on the doer, as well as on those that stand in relation to him in proximity, temporal and territorial. There is a yet higher stage than even the Satvic (Harmony) guna, which transcends the three qualities of equipoise, action and inertia. It simply takes them as they come, and is not grieved over the evil, nor exalted by the beneficent. It is unmindful of the gods and goddesses of the world, its shifting spectacle of failures and adjustments, of actualities and their supposed models. It does not, and need not care either for the world's goods or the rewards and punishments of the

hereafter. It sends forth its fragrance even as the rose that is innocent of the service that it renders to man or on the divine altar. Even as spontaneously may human genius bloom forth regardless of its utility, high or low. The desire to please is as much an impediment to true action as the tipsy condition brought on by anger or egotism. True skill consists in keeping them both out of sight, as the height of art is reached when it conceals itself. Even so negativism does not entail inaction or idleness. For idleness, God or no God, has no merits. He who is inactive trusting in God is self-deluded, but the withdrawal of the delusion ought not to be replaced by the yet worse egotism that we need not act at all nor act in the right manner. It rests on man to prove that the theistic basis of morality is not merely incorrect, but that it is further injurious.

The creedal form varies with individuals and communities, who are thus grouped together in exclusive camps, often hostile to one another. Religion, instead of being the binding force that it was originally conceived to be, has served to prompt the bitterest animosities and abet the perpetration of the worst cruelties and injustice between men and races. The medieval history of religion in Christendom is written in blood, in the pages of war, of the Inquisition, of burning at the stake and torturing on the rack, filled with brutalities that stagger the civilised mind. Every non-conformity was heretical and atheistic, and heresy-hunting was the pride and the privilege of the Church and its adherents. The intensity of religious life was measured by the extent to which those beyond the pale of the particular phase of faith were tortured. The hand of civilisation that slowly moved towards tolerance amid the shifting accidents of invasions and conquests, of forcible conversions and violent exterminations, is, however proof that behind the beast in man there is after all a fibre of humanity that slowly and determinedly is expressing itself, as it has revealed its presence oftentimes in the

past. Our faith in human genius as a power for good cannot, in the ultimate resort, be held to be misplaced. Our belief in man, the superanimal, must be held to have been well-founded, and our devotion to the cause of humanity can never be misdirected.

The revival of a kind of practical ethics following upon the revision of the social code in the light of scientific discovery and invention is the need of the hour, since two millennia have passed since the world witnessed the ethicism of Buddha. The ultimate composition of the universe resting on Mind or Matter is not of much consequence of its knowledge does not enable man to order his own life. And that ethicism must be scientific, for a morality based upon arbitrary assumptions for which there is no basis in the order of nature is bound to remain injurious rather than helpful. Falsehood and evil cannot be presumed to yield beneficial results, and progress made to rest on them is illusory and is bound to come to grief. Barring well-ordered ethics, social and individual, there is no room for serious thought. Ethics is as wide as life. Life is behaviour, the mode in which the organism, singly or in groups, reacts to the impacts of environment and evolves its future limbs to adjust itself to them. With a supreme unconcern for the cobwebs that have been woven in the archives of the past, man will push forward the wagon of life, for all superstitions and sacrifices will end in wisdom (Gnane parisamapyate, Gita IV, 33). For, knowledge excels the scriptures (the Vedas etc.), sacrifices, penance and charity; a balanced judgment is bigger than any of these; it is the Yoga of reason. It enables man to reach the paramount position of mastery over the impelling breaths of oscillation between affections and aversions, our individualistic and national pacts and prejudices. (of Gita, VIII, 28).

Buddhism concerned itself with the ethical side of life. To the fundamental metaphysical questions of existence and the problem of evil, the Buddhistic answer

was silence. Buddha began rationally with man, and the betterment of the present life. He did not emphasise the beyond, nor hang his ethics upon the peg of divinity. Virtue is its own reward, and Nirvana is the state of bliss reached by right conduct based on knowledge. The reaction against animal sacrifice and caste privilege was fearless, as was also the independent stand against the Vedas. If Buddha may be said to have taught, "Never mind God and the Vedas; do right," long after his time, and possibly after the merit of such independence had overworked itself in the subsequent encrustations among his followers, Sankara could reinstate Vedic authority to prove "I am the God" (Soham Brahma, Tat-

vamasi) "That thou art." A more emphatic assertion of the importance of the human being it is not conceivable to make. You are the God, Tat, Sat, that Beyond, the very Reality. As an incentive for replacing a drooping ethicism shorn of the bright-coloured future, the formula "I am God" is unparalleled. Again, if the absence of an ideal let the followers of the mighty ethicism fall into the track of a lower life, the presentation of an intellectual height to be reached by Gnana overcoming the Maya, Avidya, illusion of Prakriti (nature) whereon the Oneness is attained (adwaita siddhi) is a glorious lead to give to the striving genius of humanity. That genius of humanity is indeed God, the highest.

CORONATION

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Continued from last issue

BY

CHAPMAN COHEN

The Divinity of King.

Last week I dealt with the derivation of the kingship from the deification of the chief or headman of the tribe. This fact of the King being an incarnation of a god has always been present in coronation services right up to our own day, but the magical nature of the Coronation has never been put before the public of this country quite so brazenly and so impudently as was done in the case of the Coronation of May 12. Encouraged by the effects of the fifty years of intensive advertising of the monarchy, and anxious to divert attention from the circumstances of the Abdication of Edward VIII., trusting also to the narcotising influence of a gigantic show, advantage was taken of the "feast of unreason" to emphasize the miraculous nature of the Coronation of George VI. I have already given many instances of this, and will now add two more. The first is from the New

Year's message of Archbishop Lang:—

The Coronation is first of all an act of faith and worship, in which the Empire, with the King, dedicates itself to the service of God.

The Coronation, as I have shown in more than that, it is the actual endowment of the King with "divine" power and qualities. The *Times* puts it more definitely and comes nearer the truth:—

The King is a man who draws his strength from a power outside human life yet draws it not for himself. Because he is in communion with forces greater than man, his life is the life of the people.

That is much nearer the truth. And the reason why is well-known to students of anthropology, and to many others who would not find it profitable to tell the whole truth.

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Man And Nature

Why is it that a King is regarded as embodying the life of the community to such an extent that health, the sufficiency of rain, the fructification of the earth, in a word all that makes for the well-being of the tribe, depends upon him? Without understanding this aspect of the subject and without appreciating the extent to which the persistence of primitive feelings and primitive frames of mind influences contemporary life, one can never understand the case with which the persistent miseducation of the people has resulted in developing the existing phase of King-worship. The "practical-minded" man is in the habit of saying. "I have no time to bother about the past. I must attend to the practical things of the present." The poor shortsighted fool! The present is the past, as surely as this year's crop of wheat is past conditions presenting themselves in a concrete form. The pity of it is when by our stupidity we make the past extend unbroken and unimproved into the future.

To comprehend, if not completely to understand, the position, we must get back to Frazer's separation of magic from religion, and we may also graft on to this the theory of "Mana," which would serve as a starting point for both. It may, I think, be possible to construct a line of development that will fit the facts, and also an outline of the development that led to the chief, headman, or King being believed to be an incarnation of a god. And on behalf of this sketch it may be said that while there are a multitude of known facts in its favour, there is none that I am aware of that is decisively against it.

First we have to picture man as having just reached that stage of self-consciousness at which he tries to create a mental picture of what is happening around him. In common with the animal world he knows that things happen. He puts his first questioning of nature in the wrong way—Why? It is science that asks "How?" and is content with answering that question. Pre-science, and the vast mass of

the primitively-minded that are found to-day in the highest and the lowest walks of life, in the university and the church, as well as among the "lower classes," ask *why* things happen. "Mana" appears to be the first form of the answer. Some mysterious quasi-personal power seems to be responsible for everything that happens. The "Mana" in the stabbing stick is responsible for the injury it does. The "Mana" in the ground grows the food, the "Mana" of an enemy is responsible for the death of a man. So it goes on. "Mana" is the universal answer that man gives to the questions he is asking. There is no doubt at all as to the universality of this belief.

* * * *

The God-King

A greater definiteness of thought is achieved when this nebulous "Mana" is personified (in existing tribes of primitives, the two conceptions exist side by side). What may be called the infantile stage of the gods sets in, and it is here that Frazer believes we have the beginning of magic, as distinct from religion. Man believes that nature can be coerced, and attempts a clumsy, but wrong, method of establishing control over the forces that determine his destiny. This power of coercion is not resident in all, but in only a few favoured individuals, who, by means of formulae and incantations, such as we find among ourselves in the use of mascots, or lucky objects, in the belief that good luck may be enjoyed, or bad luck averted, give rise to the magician. It is the knowing, the wise ones of the tribe, who then take the lead, and they become chiefs or kings in virtue of their superior knowledge of the means whereby the forces of nature may be brought to act favourably towards man. Later, when man is forced to realize that the magic of the King is not reliable in coercing nature, its failure leads to religion. Then prayer takes the place of magic. Man does not order, he pleads. He does not stand erect and command, he crawls. It is the discovery

of human weakness, the failure of coercive effort, the supplication of despair in the form of prayer that lie at the root of developed religion.

I am compressing into a few words the outline of a very long process, the evidence for which would fill, and has filled, volumes. But, still following Frazer, while the period of magic lasts it is likened to a primitive science (not a very good analogy) inasmuch as man is then trying to do what science does today—that is, make natural forces do his bidding. The control of nature, however, as we know, is ultimately dependent on knowledge, and that was not available. To cite Frazer:—

As time goes on, the fallacy of magic becomes more and more apparent to the acuter minds, and is slowly replaced by religion; in other words the magician gives way to the priest, who renouncing the attempt to control directly the processes of nature for the good of man, seeks directly to attain the same end indirectly by appealing to the gods to do for him what he no longer fancies he can do for himself. . . . the King, starting as a magician, tends gradually to exchange the practice of magic for the priestly functions of prayer and sacrifice. And while the distinction between the human and the divine is still imperfectly drawn, it is often imagined that men may themselves attain to god-head, not merely after death, but in their lifetime, through the temporary or permanent possession of their whole nature by a great and powerful spirit. *No class of the community has benefitted so much as kings by this belief in the possible incarnation of a god in human form (Italic mine)*

There is actually no better established fact in anthropology than the fact that the King commences as an incarnation of a god, and is such because of the control he exercises over those things that are considered necessary to the well-being of the tribe. I can again give but a few examples, but they are really a few out

of thousands that might be drawn from all parts of the world, and from all stages of human culture, from the most primitive tribe right up to the Coronation of George VI.

* * * *

The King And The People.

One of the chief functions of the King was to see that rain fell in adequate quantities, and that the earth produced its proper crops. Among the Wagogo of East Africa, the main power of the chiefs depends upon his rain-making. The chief of the Masai is expected to make rain and to destroy the tribe's enemies. Among the Negroes of the Upper Nile, it is the chief who brings rain, scatters enemies, and is responsible, as is our own King in the national anthem, for making his people "happy and glorious." In 1880 the followers of Lo Bengula had no doubt that when he arrived at his Kraal the needed rain would come, much as

(Continued on page 169)

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RATIONALISM IN ANCIENT INDIA—I

BY

G. B. SINGH

The ten centuries immediately preceding the christian era were the Age of Reason in India. It was during this period that there arose the various schools of Indian philosophy, and their number is legion. An intelligent race had settled to peace and plenty in their new home, and had found leisure. The result was a luxurious growth of thought like that of elephant grass after an Indian monsoon. Indian philosophers were a class of intellectually honest men; starting with certain premises, the limit of their scientific knowledge, each one argued his case with close reasoning and logical consistency, unmindful of the conclusions to which his arguments led, and at the end, had the moral courage to adopt his conclusions as the basis of his philosophy of life. It would have been a matter of surprise indeed, and a stigma on the intelligence of the race if, in this wonderful exposition of rational freedom, schools of rational thought, which indicated mental calibre of high order, had not been represented. As a matter of fact there existed not only schools whose outlook was frankly agnostic, but a school of rank Atheism, with a cheerful hedonistic philosophy of life as its complement, instead of the sombre other-worldliness which distinguished the majority of the other systems. This system was named Lokayata, and it was claimed for it, as its name indicates, that it was the popular or the people's philosophy; and peoples' philosophy it certainly was in actual practice, for the appeal of creature comforts here and now, has always been much stronger than the painted enchantment of Heavenly houries in the distance; and the fear of the police, a far more powerful incentive to good behaviour than all the fires of Hell. The people's acceptance of this work-a-day philosophy of life in their daily practice in preference to all others, which were only for talking about, has always been advanced by the adherents

of the school, as a proof of the soundness of their doctrines. At any rate, the people seem to have felt the force of the arguments advanced by Brihaspati, the founder of the school, to an extent that they raised him to the dignity of the Teacher of gods, among whom he now shines as the planet Jupiter. In books on Indian philosophy, his school is given the first place and his thoughts are discussed before all others, forming, as they do, the first issues. A separate treatise of this school, probably compiled by Charvaka, an immediate disciple of the founder, existed at one time, for we find references made to it in subsequent literature, but the work has not come down to us. As in the case of his greek prototype, Epicurus, whom he preceded by a few centuries, we get a glimpse of his thoughts in the work of his antagonists, who have picked up some of his stray arguments with a view to refute them, and in doing so have caricatured them and held them up to ridicule. But the picture even thus painted, is far from hideous. Let us now see what it was like.

"1. We gain our knowledge of the outer world through our senses, and our minds are conscious of the feelings of pleasure and pain, of desire, hatred, effort and cognizance. Mind is the sixth internal sense we possess. This direct knowledge through the senses and the mind is the only certain and true knowledge we can have. Only one mode of proof, the direct perception or cognition is therefore admitted. Inference, analogy and authority can at best lead to probability, but not to certainty or conviction, and in their last analysis, depend upon somebody's direct knowledge by perception, communicated to others, presumably correctly, although through obviously doubtful means. They are not therefore independent and reliable modes of proof.

"2. All things in the outer world, of which we have direct and reliable knowledge, whether living or lifeless, conscious or non-conscious, are made by compounding in various ways and combinations, the four elements, symbolically represented by earth, water, fire and air.

When barley is brewed in a particular way, intoxicating effect is produced in the liquid left in the vat. Similarly consciousness is evolved in bodies made out of the elements under particular conditions. Consciousness existed in the elements in a latent form; its manifest form in living bodies we call soul; otherwise we have no direct perceptive knowledge of it, as an entity apart from the body, and no proof of its separate existence.

When one says 'he is fat' or 'he is lean,' clearly he is speaking about a self inseparable from his body, for fatness and leanness can only refer to body. As soul is not apart from the body, it must dissolve with the body at death. The necessary conclusion to be drawn from this fact, is that there is no other world or life after death, where the soul gathers the fruits of its good or bad deeds done in this world. And if there is no soul, no other world and no punishment or reward after death, then clearly no dispenser of justice or God is required. A raja is seen dispensing justice, but nobody has any knowledge of God doing so, and then there is no proof of his existence.

"3. Again we need not predicate the existence of a previous life to account for the inequalities in this one, as we can explain them otherwise. Virtue or vice in previous life or lives is not the eventual cause of the pleasure or pain that a person experiences in this life, nor is his destiny or fate the cause of them. In apparent order or arrangement or design, that we see in the world, is the result of a natural process of change or evolution from the four original elements, which go to compose it. It could not have been otherwise. Each one of these elements has a specific property inherent in

it and we have no knowledge of its ever having been without it.

"4. This being so, you need do nothing for the other-world, which does not exist; you should, instead, make happiness in this world, your sole object in life, for there is no avoiding death, nor a return from it. No doubt pleasure is mixed up with a good deal of pain, and happiness with misery; but remove the causes of misery and pain as much lies in your power and increase the stock of happiness and pleasure. A farmer does not abandon the sowing of seed for fear of damage to crops by wild pigs and deer, nor does he throw away good wholesome grain because of the husks.

"5. Your heaven and hell and your salvation are all here. Prosperity and happiness are heaven; and misery and poverty are hell; try to attain the former and keep out the latter. There is no life after death and so no religious duties are to be performed for it.

Therefore :—

1. Give up all worthless religious practices and do not deny yourself the happiness you have within your reach here, in the hope of the paradise to come.

2. Earn your livelihood in accordance with the science of political economy (Artha-Shastra).

3. Enjoy your earnings according to the rules of healthy and regulated good living (Kama-Shastra); and

4. Conduct yourself in your daily affairs in obedience to the science of Ethics and the laws of your country (Niti-Shastra).

Make these four commandments of Brihaspati the guide of your life, and you will be a true disciple of his, or a char-vaka, i.e., a follower of the four commandments. In this lies your good, your happiness, your summum bonum, your *Kalyana*.

(Continued on page 168)

NOTES & HAPPENINGS

BY

Dr. C. L. D'AVOINE

For centuries, The Church of Rome, when it held absolute sway over Europe, instituted the Holy Inquisition to compel belief. It only succeeded in murdering hundreds of thousands, imprisoned, expelled and ruined millions. While it compelled many to publicly proclaim their belief in Catholicism against their real conviction, in the end, that diabolical Institution proved a colossal failure. It showed that one cannot compel belief.

Recently, the United States of America thought of compelling people to be moral by legislation. It passed a law to prevent people from drinking spirit. This, too, proved a great failure. Both the Inquisition and the Prohibition Law of America were the works of religious fanatics. It is, therefore, with much misgiving that liberty-loving people here view the attempt of the Indian National Congress to enforce Prohibition in India. Here, too, it is religious intolerance that is at the bottom of this idiotic movement. It has been warmly advocated by people whose religion teaches them to abstain from alcoholic drinks and they fondly wish to enforce their religious doctrine on people who do not believe as they do. It is certainly strange that the Mahomedans, here, who boast that they never drink alcohol, should be anxious to see Prohibition enforced in India. The same may be said about those Hindus who say that they do not drink alcohol an account of their religion.

* * * *

Why then should they be so anxious to see Prohibition enforced here? Is it a confession that their religious teaching on the subject is a failure? To hear them talk, one would fancy that India is a land of drunkards. Though this is not True, this chorus is lustily sung by a large number of fanatics, faddists and cracks all over the country. They make much of

the consensus of medical opinion that Alcohol in excess is injurious. No one denies this, and it is certainly the duty of every decent person to enlighten people by proper education and suitable means on the danger of immoderate alcoholic drinks. But some extremists would have it that even in moderate quantities alcohol is harmful. Medical opinion is not at all unanimous on this point. Sober-minded people must recognize that a small quantity of alcohol, if not essential, is decidedly beneficial to people used to it after a day of strenuous work. It is a solace to them and it refreshes them, and by its inhibition on the nervous centres does make them, for some time, forget their troubles. In countries like France and Germany it is held by weighty medical authorities that a little alcohol is a necessity to elderly people used to it. It would seriously endanger their health if they were deprived of it. For one thing, it is the only thing that assists their digestion. Have fanatics the right to interfere with this? Cranks and faddists may say that this opinion is wrong. They are entitled to their opinion—So are other people not less informed than they.

* * * *

Man is truly said to be a creature of habit. He drinks, smokes, consumes tea, coffee, bhang other stuff not indispensable to keep him alive. No one has the right to prevent a person being satisfied with an alcoholic drink any more than he would be with a cup of coffee, tea, smoking a cigarette or by chewing a pan. These fanatics and faddists who are against alcohol generally fill themselves with copious draughts of tea, butter milk and other beverages which in the long run may be as injurious to health as alcohol. How would they feel if they were forcibly prevented from getting their favourite drink? How would the pan supari chewer

feel if he were prevented from chewing that useless and abominable thing which creates a filthy habit and is injurious to many, as it has been proved to cause cancer of the mouth and throat.

* * * *

Snakes in India, according to the papers, gave a good account of themselves on Nagpanchami day—the day devoted to the worship of Snakes in India. We have only place to relate two alleged incidents. A large number of people who were collected under a shed suddenly saw a huge snake darting away from under the wall of the building. In their fright, they also cleared out of the shed as fast as they could. In a moment the shed collapsed and buried a few who had had no time to escape.

A burglar entered the house of a pious Brahmin whose wife was in the habit of feeding a Cobra with milk. When the thief was on the point of killing the woman, the snake came out of its place of concealment and bit the burglar who soon after fell dead. The Israelites, the Bible records, were once saved from death after snake bites in the desert by looking at the brazen serpent Moses hoisted up for them to look at. Why Moses carried a brazen serpent, the Bible does not say. The probability is that the Israelites worshipped the serpent just as they did with the bull, a cult they learn in Egypt. India is perhaps the only country in the world where the serpent is generally worshipped.

* * * *

A man in New York recently shot his three daughters aged 9, 7, and 5 in order that they may join their dear mother, who, had just died, in Heaven. He then surrendered himself to the Police. He declared to the Police that the idea of his dear children living in this sinful world and in constant danger of falling into the hands of the Brooklyn Ogre was too much for him. He decided that they should go and live in happiness with their mother for ever. The belief in an after life and happy reunion of families as religion teaches was evidently very strong in

the poor man and resulted in deranging his mind. How many would become demented if they seriously believed in Hell! The fear of the Devil and his Hell haunts many wretched believers throughout their lives.

* * * *

A case of human sacrifice, the victim being a Young man of 17 years, is just reported by the paper as having occurred in Central India recently. His immolation, it would appear, was necessary to appease an angry God who was causing trouble to the people of the locality. It is sad to think that this once universal belief is still lingering in India. Speaking of the universality of this dreadful belief, it is only necessary to recall that one of the world's greatest religions, Christianity, is founded on this theory. Jesus Christ, in effect, sacrificed his life on the Cross to appease his angry father on account of the sins of man! In course of time, animal sacrifice replaced that hideous belief that the victim must be a human being. In India, animal sacrifice is still very popular.

* * * *

It has now become the fashion for certain preachers and Newspaper and Magazine writers to find in the theory of Evolution a wonderful revelation of God. When the theory of Evolution was first propounded, religious people denounced it with all their might and poured ridicule over it. Now that it is generally accepted, they profess to find the strongest proof of the existence of God in it. Very ingenious this. Evolution, they say, shows a progressive scheme which only a Super natural Intelligence could guide. Though the conception of this Evolutionary God is hazy and conflicting, it is believed to give support to Religion. The trouble is that the masses do not care much for an Impersonal deity, for remote and ether-eal in the Cosmos. They want a being like themselves on whom they can depend for protection. For practical purpose therefore Jehovah is still represented in the Churches as the God of the Universe.

* * * *

The effect of a self-evident argument on some minds is often surprising. This, of course, can only be the case in people naturally disposed to intellectual honesty. The writer noticed this the other day in a Jew who came to ask him whether it was a fact that science teaches that this world of ours has existed for millions of years.

When replied in the affirmative, he exclaimed. How cruelly religion has misled people". It would appear that this Jew had just come across the Age of Reason by Thomas Paine and for the first time in his life he read something that contradicted his Bible. "This book," he said "has opened my eyes and I no longer feel that I am a believing Jew." It is not often that common sense and the force of self-evident facts work so rapidly on a mind soaked in religious errors, sentiment and traditions. This is the more remarkable in a Jew who for sentimental reason and racial pride might have read the Age of Reason with quite a different attitude.

The Jew, in effect, is a queer individual. He lives in the past, clings to the traditions of his race with a tenacity which is often pitiable. With his strange belief and customs he is indeed a quaint figure in a modern setting.

RATIONALISM IN ANCIENT INDIA

(Continued from page 165)

Short and Sweet: is it not?

6. The followers of this school did not take kicks from others lying down, but kicked back and with full force. Here is a sample of the treatment meted out to the orthodox followers of the Vedas:—

"If an animal killed in the sacrifice to gods goes to Heaven, then why do you not kill your father?

If the offerings made to Brahmans here can give satisfaction to the souls of the departed elsewhere, then why prepare a hamper for friends going on a journey?

If gifts made below get to ancestors in heaven above, then why not adopt this method to feed those sitting on the roof

of the house?

If the soul after parting with the body can go to the other world, then why cannot the love of near and dear ones bring it back to them? (a very sound argument).

The fact is that all these sacrifices, these gifts and offerings, these religions books and practices have been devised by cunning priests as a means of livelihood and for their lazy good-for-nothing brethren in craft."

Such is a brief summary of the doctrines of Brihaspati. To me it appears that notwithstanding the tremendous advance that scientific knowledge has made since the days of Brihaspati, the modern Rationalists have not yet travelled much beyond the stage he reached, even if they have gone as far as that. We can improve very little upon his *basic* ideas regarding the evolution of the human body and soul from the original elements, the philosophy of life he teaches, or the modes of proof he admits.

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CORONATION.

(Continued from page 163)

many in this country attributed to divine providence the fine weather that accompanied the Jubilee of George V. The ancient Mexican Kings took an oath at their accession that they would make the sun shine, the rain to fall, and the earth to be fruitful. The ancient Egyptian Kings went farther than any in this direction. Not only the weather and the crops, and victory in battle depended upon the King, but also the very life of the gods. In celebrating divine worship the King said, "O gods you are safe if I am safe. Your doubles are safe if my double is safe at the head of all living doubles. All live, if I live." If one can imagine one of our Kings with enough philosophy and knowledge and wit to repeat this prayer, we could well take it as a very fine piece of satire. Kingship and religion are indissolubly connected. James the First said the same thing in his "No bishop, no king."

The ancient Burgundian Kings also possessed the power of securing good crops, and might be deprived of their position if they failed to do so. That, again, expresses a very common phenomenon. A King who fails to carry out his part of the contract, is often removed or ceremonially killed. So important is this function of controlling the rain and the weather and of giving victory, that in many instances a King may be sacrificed for no other reason than that he is getting old. That is because as he grows weaker so may the power of the sun, or the quality of the rain, or the certainty of victory be less. Among the Red Indian tribes the rain-making functions of the chief is well-established. Among the Swedes good or bad crops were always attributed to the King. A canon of St. Patrick attributes to Kings, "fine weather, calm seas, crops abundant, and trees laden with fruit." The cure of disease by the divine touch of the King is also very common, and one need only remind readers that as late as Queen

Anne's reign, the monarch, after being consecrated, had the power of curing certain diseases by a touch. And at the Jubilee of George V. it was solemnly suggested by some newspaper correspondents that this practice might be revived with profit to sufferers. It may be taken that if the ceremony had been revived, which after all is no more remarkable than the curing of disease by the "laying on of hands," there would have been thousands of cures recorded. A people who can treasure the memory of the touch of a King, or a glance from a Queen is not really so very far removed from the state of mind indicated by the practices above noted.

* * * *

An Ancient Ceremony

No reasonable person can doubt that the Coronation Service, in even its present emasculated form, is no more than another version of the ceremonial induction of the chiefs of uncivilized peoples all over the world. It must be noted that it is through the magic of the Archbishop that the King is endowed with the power to "give his people guidance," to gain victory, to secure plenty, and so forth. It is not said of, and it is not claimed for, the *man* who was King by Act of Parliament. It would have been glaringly absurd to have spoken of the people receiving the benefits named through the man-King but when we are dealing with the god-King we are on a different level. As the "Times" says, he draws his power from outside human life. Ridiculous in itself, once the magic of the holy oil is applied, and the performance staged with the technique of Hollywood show and a verbose religious ceremony, the absurd becomes "impressive." It is the "sanctified" monarch that does the trick.

Next week I will deal with the social consequences of this perpetuation of uncivilized ideas in our own time. But I think I have said enough to justify my repeated statement that the Coronation Service comes to

us direct from the jungle, and that it embodies one of the earliest superstitions of mankind. Between the ceremony in Westminster Abbey and the induction of a chief among the Zulus, the Masai, the Igbo, the negroes of the Nile, the Fijians, the denizens of Malaya, the ancient Maxicans, the Egyptian Kings, there is not the slightest substantial difference. The medicine-man grins through the mask of the Archbishop, the tom-tom beats through the peal of the organ, the smell of the forest comes through the perfume of incense, the impressive solemnity of the peers of the Britain masks the awe of the savage watching his chief receive the spirit of the tribal joss. It is all there, and the fact that so many of the onlookers and participants at Westminster no longer accept the performance in its real and legitimate sense makes the whole proceeding the more intellectually and socially demoralizing.

A Threat To Civilization

In the course of a lecture on "The Scope of Social Anthropology," delivered in 1908, Sir James Frazer said:—

Systematic enquiries... have revealed the astonishing, nay, the alarming truth, that a mass, if not the majority of every civilized society is still living in a state of intellectual savagery, that, in fact, the smooth surface of cultured society is sapped and mined with superstition. Only those whose studies have led them to investigate the subject are aware of the depth to which the ground beneath our feet is thus honeycombed by unseen forces. We appear to be standing on a volcano which may at any moment break out in smoke and fire to spread ruin and devastation.

I think this may well be taken as a text for the conclusion of my notes on the uprising of savagery that we have been witnessing in this country in connexion with the mumbo-jumboism of the Coronation. The Coronation is, of course, only one instance of many that is indicative of the threat to civilization

to which Sir James Frazer refers. We have the same thing on a large scale in the throwback to the primitive in the development of a pre-scientific racialism and a narrow form of tribalism in Germany and Italy. We are not without this form of reversion in this country, and we have also the prevalence of stupid superstitions, from reading the future in tea-leaves, to the carrying of mascots in the shape of a lucky stone or doll on a motor-car, the wearing of a talismanic cross, and a hundred other stupidities that are called religious when established, and superstitious when they are not. Hobbes' famous definition of superstition and religion still holds the field. And once more I must guard myself by saying that the undeveloped mentality indicated by these practices has no *class* boundary or significance. The practices flourish with the Court as they do with the most ignorant villager in a remote part of the country. They are as rife in the university as in the gutter. It is the knowledge that goes with understanding that matters. Knowledge without understanding is very common, and there is no fool quite so hopeless of improvement as the fool with knowledge, but who lacks any great degree of understanding.

If I remain alive, and active, for another two years I shall then have completed fifty years of continuous Free-thought platform work. I believe this will constitute a record in the history of our movement. And during all these years I have been vividly conscious of the savage in our midst, and of the threat he offers to whatever genuine civilization we have acquired. That is why I have dwelt so strongly upon the intrinsic nature of our very much advertised Coronation Service. We simply cannot have a secure civilization with a population, a very large part of which so easily gives way to the play of primitive impulses and the sway of primitive beliefs. The king-worship that has been so sedulously cultivated for the past half-century, the impudent advertising of the nature of the Westminster miracle-play,

these, with numerous other happenings, are not merely illustrative proof of the soundness of Frazer's warning, they are also evidence of the readiness of large numbers of men and women to exploit this latent barbarism for purely selfish ends. This barbarism does stand, if I may use a term which in the mouths of most implies either folly or knavery, as a symbol. It is a symbol of the primitive in man, and a warning that beneath a thin veneer of culture there is the savage naked and unashamed.

A Substitute For Monarchy

In the preceding articles I have tried to keep distinct the question of an hereditary monarchy from that of monarchy in general. The latter is a question mainly of terminology, and if it is to be rejected it is only because it carries that reference to the savage which it is advisable to eliminate as far as possible. But an hereditary monarchy is an insult to human intelligence. To have at the head of the State one whose sole valid claim is that he has achieved the feat of being the son of his father, and who, whether he be genius or next door to an idiot, is still King, is of all institutions the most ridiculous. As Paine pointed out, there is as great a warranty for the present generation selling future generations into slavery, as there is for a past generation to determine who shall be the head of the State when they are dead and probably forgotten.

In that storehouse of wise sociological teachings, *A Yankee at the Court of King Arthur* (The story turns upon a Yankee who is transported back into the court of King Arthur, and describes the way in which he sets to work to civilize the people of Arthur's day), one of the characters argues in favour of a Republic with an hereditary monarch.

He believed that no nation that had ever known the joy of worshipping a Royal Family could ever be robbed of it and not die of melancholy. I urged that Kings were very dangerous.

He then said: Then have cats. He was sure that a royal family of cats would serve every purpose. They would be as useful as any other royal family, they would know as much, they would have the same virtues and the same treacheries, the same disposition to get up shindies with other royal cats, they would be laughingly vain and absurd and never know it, they would be wholly inexpensive; and, finally, they would have as sound a claim to a divine right as any other royal house, and Tom XI. or Tom XIV. by the grace of God would sound as well as when applied to the ordinary tom-cat with tights on. . . . The worship of royalty being founded in unreason, these graceful and harmless cats would become as sacred as any royalties, and indeed more so because it would presently be noticed that they hanged nobody, beheaded nobody, imprisoned nobody, inflicted no cruelties and injustices of any sort, and so must be worthy of a deeper love and reverence than the customary human king, and would certainly get it.

After all, cats were worshipped in ancient Egypt, and for the same reason that the King was offered "worship" in Westminster in 1937. One need only remember that royal virtues go with the office to realize that this suggestion of the page-boy in Twain's novel deserves some consideration.

For the main suggestion here offered, I think I might quote Mr. Winston Churchill in support. In the course of the discussion on the Civil List Bill he defended the Coronation display on the grounds that the people loved to see the throne surrounded with pomp and ceremony, and they enjoyed a pageant. I think this is quite true of large masses of the population, and it holds out a very easy way of governing, and gulling, them. "Bread and the Circus" as a maxim of government is at least as old as the Roman Empire. And every film-star manager knows that "We must

have publicity." And if we must have a monarchy because the people love pomp and ceremony and pageantry, then it seems that the suggestion of the "Yankee" really does deserve consideration. In that case, as a mere "symbol" there seems no reason why a race of royal cats might not do. Dean Swift, had he been alive, might have suggested an animal of a larger size and with longer ears, but that is a matter of detail. I take it that Mr. Churchill did not realize how near he was getting to Mark Twain.

* * * *

Save Us From Our Friends

The extent to which the development of king-worship has gone has been illustrated in previous articles. I need only recall the stupid outburst in the "*Times*" to the effect that the King embodied the life of the people, and that he was moved by forces beyond ordinary human beings. This extravagant adulation of the Royal Family has gone so far that even the staid and conservative *Spectator* was forced to raise a protest. The passage I am citing was used by one of the speakers in the Civil List debate, and it is worth noting that none of the papers reported it. It does not do to give the game away too openly:—

The blurb writers represent our royalties to be partly creatures out of fairy-land, partly super-human, and partly divine. I read in a great newspaper, "the Princess Elizabeth has to a peculiar degree the art of carrying herself with an easy charm and grace and dignity. She is steeped in economics, and accomplished in Latin, French and German, while the principles and precedents of the Constitution will soon be studied."

And this of a child of eleven, belonging to a family concerning which it is not claimed by even its most fervent admirers, that any of its members possess outstanding mental ability. I do not know anything about the easy charm, grace and dignity of the Princess—these

qualities go with the post—but I am sure that if a child can stand the public exhibition to which this one is exposed, with men and women bowing before her in the full gaze of the public, and kept constantly on show to receive public applause, if a child can stand all this unspoiled, it must indeed be more or less, than human. I do not think that any parent will deny the truth of this.

One almost ceases to marvel at the writer cited last week, who made the discovery that the English home was restored to us by George V. and Mr. Baldwin. Consider. There are round about ten millions of homes in these islands. In all but a very small number, the family life in them is clean and decent, and the members of the family behave loyally to each other. So loyally that I question whether in many of them an order, presumably from a Prime Minister and an Archbishop, that they must not attend a brother's marriage, would have received any attention. If a man walked into a newspaper office with the information that he had visited a hundred homes and found ninety per cent decent, he would be treated as a fool. No one expects otherwise. It is the blackguardly home that constitutes "news." The opposite sort is very common. It is the character of the domestic life of our monarchs, of Charles II and William III., of the four Georges and of William IV., that has led to praise of the domestic life of their successors. If taken at its face value the praise of the family life of our recent monarchs is an announcement of a reform, not news of an example. The Archbishop of Canterbury holds that human morality depends upon a belief in God. The believers in the divinity of Kings hold that it is the example of the Royal Family, our Royal Family, that has induced the normal home to be decent. The Recall to Religion and the Deification of the King go well together.

King As Symbol.

Of old the deification of the King expressed the savage. To-day it masks

him. In the one case it was an attempt of the uninstructed human intelligence to deal with the facts as they were understood. To-day it is an example of the danger to civilization that Frazer indicates. Mr. Churchill apologizes for the garishness of the Coronation by saying that the people like pomp, and it brings the throne nearer to them. Others explain that the people are naturally interested in the principal figures in the State. These are idle subterfuges. There is a President in the United States and in France. People are interested in them—as Presidents. But there is not this showman's parade of them and their families, and if neither President ever said anything or did anything out of the ordinary, if their chief function was to open institutions, to visit hospitals and talk to selected cases, to attend a dinner or a garden party or an exhibition or a theatre, and to have even the shortest of speeches written for them, one may question whether Frenchmen or Americans would regard their Presidents as extraordinary men, who demanded for their sustentation some force superior to that which bears upon ordinary individuals. Neither the President of France nor of America ever talks of "my Army" or "my Navy," nor is there in either country the legal fiction that the land of the country belongs to the President, and that law and justice come from him. These are all heritages from the age of the god-king. There is no talk in either America or France of Presidential blood; nor is there when the President is enthroned a sanctification service that endows him with some quality of the divine.

It is said that the King stands to his people as a "symbol"—a word which, suggestively enough, is used to rehabilitate the decaying belief in a god. But why a symbol? Are we to believe that the Englishman does not love his country or respect his institutions enough to save them for their own sake? Are we to believe that although the Frenchman or the American can act upon an intelligent appreciation of national institutions, the

Briton can only do this when they are embodied in a man or a woman? If so, this is a very curious way of praising the inhabitants of the British Empire. But if the people are to take an absurdity seriously, it must be stated very solemnly.

Of what is the King a symbol? Of the permanency of our institutions? That is impossible. The duration of our institutions is a matter for the people and Parliament. The King has nothing to do with that. Is he the symbol of our liberties? Again, impossible. Recent events have shown that the King must do as he is ordered by his ministers; and it is a common lesson of history that everywhere the liberties of the people have been wrung from the throne. There is no instance in history where the reverse is the case. Mr. Churchill, speaking in the House of Commons, said that the King was our greatest protection against dictatorships. Nonsense! It is actually the countries where the Kings really took part in the control of the country that have gone over to the worst forms of dictatorship. It is in the two countries in which Kings do not exist, and the one in which their power is most severely curtailed that democracy has come best through the post-war years.

It is said the King is a symbol of unity. A unity of what? Of religion? The King is so little a symbol of unity here, that not only is his religion selected for him, but to change it means that he would cease to be King, and while he is by law an Episcopalian in England, whenever he enters Scotland he again is by law, a Presbyterian. And taking the British Empire as a whole, the King's dictated religion represents the belief of only a very small minority of the people of the Empire. Mr. Churchill's philosophy—and it is not peculiar to him, appears to be that the only way to rule the people is to fool them..

The King is a symbol! That is an insult to the King disguised as a compliment. For a symbol is a sign that stands

for something not itself. A flag may be a symbol of a country, but the piece of bunting is nothing. Mathematicians deal with symbols, but the signs they use are in themselves mere scratches on a piece of paper. One of the symbols of some American colleges is a howl that reminds one of feeding time at the Zoo. When these people defend the hereditary monarchy on the ground that it is a symbol, they are really saying that the King in himself is nothing; anyone or anything will do once we have got accustomed to it. They tell us we are not asked to pay respect to the man or woman on the throne. They are nothing. They are mere symbols. If that is not insulting the occupant of the throne, what is it? And if it is not Twain's philosophy of hereditary cats, what is it?

Again, I must guard myself against misunderstanding. I am not arguing that the appointed head of the State shall not be called King, although that term carries certain bad implications. I am only trying to guard against the repetition of an orgy of barbarism such as the country has recently witnessed, and the "tongue-in-the-cheek" philosophy that has been served up by such men as Mr. Churchill. The Archbishop's "Recall to Religion" has been used to cover the forced abdication of Edward VIII. The lavish Coronation-cum-Hollywood show had the magical nature of the Coronation emphasized as part payment to the Archbishop. A man with so much cunning in his eyes is not likely to do what he did without securing a *quid pro quo*. Church and Throne have worked well together. They were together in origin. They will be together at the end. A King minus the religious nimbus round his head becomes an officer of the State, to be judged as other State functionaries are judged. He is not a symbol. He is something.

One cannot say when the semi-magical King and the overpaid fantastically-dressed medicine-man will disappear from civilized society. Thousands of generations ago the wild dog contracted the habit of trampling down the grass

before taking its rest. It served to warn the dog against any noxious thing that might lie hidden in the grass. To-day the domesticated descendant of that wild dog goes through the same performance before settling down on the dining-room hearthrug. Thousands of generations ago the King came into being as an incarnation of nature spirits—a God. Then the god-king caused the sun to shine, the rain to fall, the crops to grow, and held at bay, disease. He was, as the Archbishop of York said of George VI., an incarnation of the life and health of the community. The generations pass. Conditions change, but the frame of mind that was common to our openly savage ancestors persists. We still pray for Victory through the King. We still sanctify and anoint him to mark him off from common human nature. The ceremonial approach to the god-king, necessary to protect the subject against the powerful "mana" of the King, is still with us in our court ceremonies. The touch of a King, is still treasured as bringing us momentarily within the sacred circle. Times have changed, knowledge has widened and deepened, but old habits remain with man as with the domesticated dog. Like the dog in the dining-room trampling down non-existent grass, protecting himself against dangerous things that are not there, man still secretes in his brain-cells the potentiality of the superstitions that hung as a constant terror over the life of our earliest ancestors.

If the existence of the savage meant no more than fondness for display, a childish love of decorations or of a uniform, the whole might be passed with a smile. The more dangerous aspect is that a calculated use of these primitive impulses by those who are skilful enough to utilize them to advance their own ends is a constant threat to all that makes for the real dignity of manhood and the sure progress of the race. Germany offers us to-day the extreme example of how a people can be induced to turn their backs upon art and literature, and even to value science only to the extent to which it can

minister to the most brutal passions and to the most primitive ideas. The hope of the world lies not so much in the extermination of the primitive in man, as in its "sublimation," in enlarging the mental outlook and in broadening the human sympathies, and in establishing a real conviction of the fundamental equality of human nature. There can be no such conviction while we encourage, some of us in ignorance, others of set purpose, the primitive superstition that lies so deeply embedded in king-worship.

It is with this deeper end in view that I have dwelt so lengthily on the real significance of the brazenly published magical nature of the Coronation Service, and the impudent advertising of the Royal Family as the source of family purity and national greatness. We have come a long way from palaeolithic man;

but we have not travelled so far that we may not find ourselves back to him, led there in the wake of a cheap and tawdry popular pageant, with the present-day medicine-men as masters of the ceremonies, and by the aid of a prostituted science and a debased culture.

The old Roman Civilization fell before the inrush of hordes of barbarians and barbarian culture, which achieved its end in the name of a "Recall to Religion." To-day we have no such outside horde of barbarians to fear. The barbarians of to-day are within the gates. It is they we have to fear. In the words of Frazer, already cited, our culture is "sapped and mined with superstition" that "may at any moment break out in smoke and fire to spread ruin and devastation."

(End)

IF I WERE INDIAN

BY

FREDERICK J. GOULD

No land on earth is to my mind more vitally interesting than India, and I think its social future will immensely influence the course of civilization. So I will try to emphasize four aspects of social evolution by imagining for a few moments that I was born a son of India. What lines of progress do I seek to follow?

1. I should join up with my friend, Prof. D. K. Karve of Poona, whom the Vice-Chancellor of Lucknow University has deservedly praised for his pioneer efforts on behalf of the education and civic status of women. Auguste Comte said "Woman is the true type of our race" (that is, of Humanity). As an old politician, I affirm that no political changes are of value unless in some way or other they improve the social dignity of womanhood.

2. I should labour day and night to spread education among the quite ordinary girls and boys in every corner of India. When I visited India in 1913,

and in nine cities conversed publicly with youth, I found the lads brightly responsive on issues of human conduct, and I have met none better in Britain or America. When in July 1937, I addressed a London meeting on the "Education of Universal Youth" I was glad to do so on the invitation of Mr. Das Gupta. Whatever the Hindu and Muslim politicians may do in the field of self government, no plan can finally avail unless the millions are educated.

3. I should specially toil for the economic betterment of the vast masses of Indian peasantry, their co-operative societies, their salvation from money-lenders, their training in self-government on 20th century lines, and their practical activities in sanitation, arts, crafts, modern modes of agriculture, etc.

4. I should join with other pioneers in establishing an Ethical Church, or Religion of Humanity, distinctly separate from all the theologies, and yet glo-

rifying the ideals of Love and Helpfulness and Poetic Vision in the Spirit of the best Indian traditions. I would seek to rescue Harijans from the age-long burden of untouchability by drawing them into the membership of the Ethical Faith, with its purely human ritual and festivals.

Postscript:—I trust the Editor will permit me to close with the intimation that I am sending him a number of free copies of the recent address on Education above referred to, for distribution to the Indian comrades.

BY THE WAY...

(Continued from page 177)

We acknowledge with thanks from:—

Mr. G. B. Singh, Lahore, Rs. 5/-;
Mrs. M. F. M. Phelips, Rs. 5/-.

Subscriptions to "Reason."

M. Rogers, England, 1s. 6d; Jas. A. Oduneye, Ibadan, Nigeria, West Africa, 5s.

We are thankful to Mr. J. R. Labelle for presenting to our library 12 copies of Thomas Paine's "*Age of Reason*", and to Dr. C. L. D'Avoine for "*Radio is Changing us*" by D. Cleghorn Thomson, and "*Psychology, the Changing Outlook*" by Francis Aveling.

We are sorry that due to certain difficulties we had to issue a joint number for September|October.

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REASON

(Estd. 1931)

The Journal of The Rationalist
Association of India.
5-12, Queen's Road,
Bombay.

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All contributions should be addressed to the Editor "REASON" Jagjivan Mansions, 13, New Bhatwadi, Bombay 4, and should reach the editor on or before the 15th of each month.

The writers of the articles in this journal are themselves responsible for the views expressed and do not implicate the Rationalist Association of India in any way.

For Advertisement rates etc. Please apply to the Business Manager "REASON" care of the Rationalist Association of India. Concession rates to member.

Subscription for "Reason" Re. 1/8 & Foreign 3 Shillings annually.

BY THE WAY...

Dr. R. P. Paranjpye, Vice-Chancellor of Lucknow University (our member) recently paid a well-merited tribute to Prof. D. K. Karve, Founder and tireless supporter of the Hindu Women's University. "Karve's movement," said Dr. Paranjpye, "is based on purely secular ideals" and he praised the pioneer as a "great saint of Modern India".

On September 1, Mr. Chapman Cohen, Editor of "Freethinker" and President of the National Secular Society, London, enters upon his seventieth year. His services in the cause of militant free-thought are truly remarkable. We wish him many happy returns of the day, success and renewed energy in his wonderful work.

Our Assistant Editor, Mr. K. T. Chandy, sailed for England where he will be prosecuting further studies in Law. Our best wishes for his success. We expect to receive his contributions to *Reason* regularly.

The 1938 Conference of the International Union of Freethought Societies is expected to be held in London. We hope to be represented there.

The Reserve Fund of the R. A. I. is receiving attention and we are pleased to announce the following donations:—

Dr. G. V. Deshmukh, Rs. 100/-;

Dr. A. S. Erulkar, Rs. 100/-;

Mr. D. R. D. Wadia has become Patron of the R. A. I. by donating Rs. 500/-.

We have also received promises from Dr. C. L. D'Avoine, Mr. J. R. Labelle and others.

On September 20 at Blavatsky Lodge, under the auspices of the R.A.I., Mr. G. D. Kulkarni, B.A., LL.B., Honorary Secretary, Birth Control League, Poona, spoke on "The Way to Abolish War and Poverty". Prof. R. D. Karve presided. *Reason* copies were on sale at the entrance. Mr. Kulkarni in a very interesting and informative discourse showed that poverty and over-population were the real causes of war. He advocated Birth Control as the only rational method to prevent war.

(Continued on page 176)

Philosophy is a dangerous thing for any
dogmatic religion. It makes men think.
Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru.

REASON

THE JOURNAL OF THE RATIONALIST ASSOCIATION OF INDIA

"TO COMBAT ALL RELIGIOUS AND SOCIAL BELIEFS AND CUSTOMS THAT CANNOT STAND THE
TEST OF REASON AND TO ENDEAVOUR TO CREATE A SCIENTIFIC AND TOLERANT MENTALITY
AMONG THE PEOPLE OF THIS COUNTRY." *"Objects of the Rationalist Association of India."*

New Series.

NOV. DEC. 1937

No. 10-11.

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THE RETREAT OF RELIGION

BY

R. D. KARVE

Mr. Natarajan, editor of the "Indian Social Reformer", in a complacent mood induced by his journal starting on its 48th year and himself reaching what he calls the "psalmist's figure of three score and ten"—and we congratulate him on both these facts—has taken a review of his own religious development. His journal does advocate social reform, of sorts, or what used to be considered social reform 47 years back when it was started. I believe he is one of the pillars of the local Prarthana Samaj and frequently conducts prayers at their Sunday meetings. As usual, where religion is at a premium, reason is at a discount, as one can easily see by perusing the article we refer to. In it he says:—

"Let me begin with religion which, when all is said, is the most abiding in-

terest of humanity. There can be no better proof of this, as far as India is concerned, than the fact that despite much rationalist propaganda, the moving, talking pictures which draw enormous crowds even in industrial Bombay are those which depict stories from the Puranas or incidents in the lives of the saints of medieval India."

Had Mr. Natarajan cared to go deeper into the matter, we believe he has intelligence enough to notice certain other relevant factors which he has obviously neglected in drawing the above unwarranted conclusion. His reference to "industrial Bombay" itself furnishes one of the clues he has missed. A vast proportion of the crowds that witness these religious films is drawn from the labouring classes, mill-hands and others. As is

patent even to the superficial observer, the stronghold of religion is the ignorance of the masses. The mournful lament of religious people all over the world is that education is undermining religion. And this is happening in spite of the religious tinge that is given to education everywhere except in Russia, in spite of the fumes of this opium of the people arising periodically from orthodox and semi-orthodox pulpits from temples and mosques and churches and synagogues, as well as the platforms of congregations like the Arya-Samaj, the Brahmo-Samaj, the Prarthana-Samaj etc., which pretend to have improved Hinduism by reducing the number of gods to one. I always feel tempted to ask them why they do not go one step further and reduce it to zero. In fact it is far more logical to imagine a plurality of gods to explain the chaos that is found in the world, rather than one benevolent and omnipotent god. One god has to be either impotent or cruel if his existence is to be compatible with the amount of suffering in the world.

To return to the religious film, besides the fact that the attraction of the religious subject operates mostly on the uneducated, who constitute the crowd, there is nothing to prevent a film being artistic even if the subject is religious, and in that case the subject will not prevent even educated people from seeing it. In fact, I must myself plead guilty to having seen the particular film "Tukaram" to which Mr. Natarajan refers, and I could say the same of many who are either rationalists or belong to other religions and so could not have a religious interest in Tukaram.

Let us analyse a little the kind of attraction that people find in religion, and incidentally the life of this particular saint. All religions provide an easy way of getting rid of your sins, a sort of laundry for the soul. Again in most religions, there are heavens and hells, the former meaning perpetual enjoyment and the latter perpetual torture. I do not know if Mr. Natarajan accepts these ideas but it cannot be denied that they have a powerful influence on the uneducated.

The whole priestly class in each religion encourages belief in them. But that is not all. The priests are a crafty class and know human nature. They are not content with providing pleasure and pain after death according as a man is religious or irreligious, but provide attractions to religious people in this world too. The attraction of music and dancing operates on all classes of people and these two are amply provided for. In fact Tukaram himself does both these on the screen and did no doubt do the same when he lived. The huge procession of religious people that goes all the way to Pandharpur on foot every year is singing and dancing all the time. Even sex appeal, which even Mr. Natarajan will not refuse to admit as one of the most powerful forces in the world, is not forgotten. There is actually a dancing girl in the film, even though Tukaram naturally condemns her. But she is there for the spectator, even if she is condemned. And we must remember that she is not always condemned by religion. Temples have dancing girls and even prostitutes (Devadasis) in their service, who supply physical as well as spiritual needs. How then is religion any better than a harlot? People are attracted to it in exactly the same way. It may be supposed, however, that saints like Tukaram are exceptions and their attraction to religion is spiritual only. Let us see.

While Tukaram preached the futility of earthly pleasures, it is a historical fact that when his first wife died, he married again, and that this second wife was pregnant when Tukaram died, or, as is shown on the screen in accordance with the common belief, went bodily to heaven. In this respect at any rate, his life was not consistent with what he preached. And what did he expect to get in heaven? Since it was his ambition to go bodily to heaven, and spiritual pleasures do not need a body, the inference is obvious that he expected bodily pleasures there. The only difference between earthly pleasures and heavenly pleasures for him therefore must have been that the pleasures would be better in quality and that they would last for ever. The Apsaras

who are supposed to minister to the needs of the faithful in Heaven are naturally incomparably more beautiful than the women on earth, and I suppose the food would also be better. On no other ground can the ambition to go there bodily be explained.

It is said that some saints do not consider a residence in heaven as the end of religion and rather pretend to despise it. What they want is "Moksha", that is a release from the cycle of rebirths which is supposed to be the lot of common people, implying that the spiritual part of them, or the soul, becomes incorporated in God. What use this can be to anybody is hard to understand. This is in fact the mentality of a man who commits suicide, who gives up the joy of living in order to avoid the misery of life. One may indeed sympathise with one who is impelled to this course by unfortunate circumstances, but I for one do not find anything noble or admirable in it. So whether the aim of religious people be enjoyment in heaven or the utter annihilation implied in Moksha or Nirvana, it is an utterly selfish aim, and selfishness can at best be excusable. It can never be praiseworthy, and though

religious people may laud themselves and their faiths to the skies, the most charitable view that a rationalist can take of it is to consider it pardonable vanity. The above analysis shows that even the misconceptions of truth which are known as religions do not justify that vanity.

Meanwhile, rationalists can safely retort to Mr. Natarajan and the like that the faithful of all religions are lamenting that religion is disappearing. It has to retreat as science advances. If, in India, Mr. Natarajan finds religion still going strong, it is because India lags behind the rest of the world in education and a foreign government is naturally not very anxious to hasten it. Mr. Natarajan is not in the habit of analysing things. When he sees a crowd at a cinema for a religious film, he thinks it is religion that is the inspiring motive. We have seen that it is not. When he sees a crowd at the Prarthana-Samaj Hall, he may be sure that one motive for going there is that it is a mixed crowd, including both sexes. The sex appeal operates even there, though perhaps the idea may horrify Mr. Natarajan. Religion is imaginary, while the sex appeal is real, and you cannot substitute imaginary motives for real ones.

SCIENCE AND RELIGION

BY

CHAPMAN COHEN

(Reproduced from "FREETHINKER")

The historical fight of the Christian Church with Science (itself a phase of the larger conflict of religion with science) still goes on. I say the fight *with* rather than *between* the Church and Science, because science never set out to fight religion. All that science did, all that it asked, was to continue its work and place the results at the service of mankind. It was the Church, carrying humanity's curse, a "sacred" book, that declared war on science. The first demand of the Church was that nothing which contradicted established religious doctrines should be taught by science—which really meant that nothing should be discovered or

taught that was contrary to the Bible. (Twentieth century Nazi and Proletarian Science is but a faint echo of the early and strident demand of the Church.) That decree meant the death of science in the ancient world, and had not the development of science continued outside Christendom, the revival of Europe would have been delayed for many centuries.

About the fourteenth century of the Christian era some one discovered a compromise. It was said that a teaching might be true in science, but false in theology, and *vice versa*. This type of

compromise is not yet dead. It exists with those of the clergy who talk evolution in ordinary life, and special creation in Church; and among those of the laity who commence a profession of faith with "according to my religion, I believe," etc. A final phase of this long fight of the Church against positive science is now fashionable. In this phase the legitimacy of science searching where it pleases, discovering what it can, is admitted, but after all, it is said, science cannot tell us everything—it cannot, in fact tell us anything of fundamental importance. For a final analysis of the world and of man we must fall back on religion. It is religion alone that can disclose the secret of man's nature and destiny.

The fight thus continues. It continues because it must. It was not science that began the warfare; it was the Church with a "revealed" religion that explained the origin of the world, of man, and of morals. All that science has ever asked is to be let alone, to be permitted to go on with its work. It was not the fault of science that what it discovered was in direct conflict with established religious teaching. It was not the fault of science that when God "revealed" how the world was made, how different languages came, what was the cause of disease, and the structure of the universe, his revelation was found not to be in accord with the facts. That may have been due to God's forgetfulness, or to his having selected faulty channels of communication. But the historic truth is that revealed religion *had* to declare war on science; and if to-day the war waged by religion is less honest and less courageous than it once was, this is because an open repudiation of science is no longer profitable. The emphasis has to be placed on the inadequacy of science; its inability to answer every question that any fool cares to put, and solve every conundrum that may be concocted. The godite, who will accept the most fantastic, the most outrageous, the most absurd religious stories without the slightest evidence, demands the most conclusive demonstration before he will accept a statement in the name of science—even when it is offered merely

as a working hypothesis. In so acting men in the highest position in the Churches appear to believe they are proceeding with wisdom and caution. They are not; they are exhibiting that cunning and intellectual dishonesty which is a marked characteristic of Christian apologetics.

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A Defence Of Religion

Apropos of the meeting of the British Association (an annual occasion for an exhibition of that mixture of stupidity and dishonesty already described) an article by Mr. A. W. Haslett is given the place of honour in the *Morning Post* for September 1. Mr. Haslett aims at showing that (1) Science does not know everything, (2) that it really knows very little, and about Reality and Religion it knows nothing at all. (3) there is no ultimate truth to be found in science. Here is proposition number one:—

How much, at bottom, can science tell us of the world we live in?

And here is the answer—by Mr. Haslett:—

Science can tell us an indefinite amount about how things behave, little or nothing, in the last resort, about what things are.

I like this way of putting the matter. It sounds so profound, it means so little. It carries to so many the vision of heads heavily-laden with knowledge, but to the more discerning the picture is that of peas rattling in a bladder. Suppose science can tell us very little about the world, is there anyone or anything that can tell us more? At any rate all we do know about the world has been taught us by science, and when that fails us, to whom or to what are we to look for more and better knowledge? To the Archbishop of Canterbury? The Bishop of London? General Booth? The Bible? Mr. Haslett is too much in the air. The bladder has become a toy balloon. The day has gone by when religious leaders could successfully pretend to have sources of information not open to ordinary people. That claim masks imposture. Religious leaders may know all that God knows, but God

only knows what it is that religious leaders know. There is only one way of knowing, and that way is open to all. And there is only one way of testing the value and reliability of the knowledge we acquire, and that is by the way of science. And where science stops all must stop. The ignorance of science, temporary or permanent, is the ignorance, temporary or permanent, of all mankind. I cannot say whether Mr. Haslett knows this or not. I am certain that everyone with common sense realizes it.

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Fooling With Words

Mr. Haslett complains that all science knows about things is the way they behave, therefore we do not know anything about things. The first statement is correct; the second is nonsense. In science the "behaviour" of a thing is what it does, and behaviour as used in this connection is the appearance of a thing, its actions and reactions. An apple, for example, means a combination of shape, colour, taste, and so, if this combination were not present, the object would not be an apple. But an apple does not mean a separate thing in which colour, taste, shape, perfume, etc., are stuck, as Huxley said, like tickets in a cheese. For us the combination of qualities is the object before us; give it other qualities and it is a different object. When, therefore, science tells us how a thing behaves, it is telling us, not merely all that is of use to us, it is also telling us all there is to know. The "behaviour" of a thing (using the word in a strictly scientific sense) is the thing. And if there were something else, it would not be the same thing. An apple which did not behave as the apple we know behaves would not be an apple at all. I hope Mr. Haslett will not find this too profound. I can assure him that its profundity lies in its absolute simplicity. And the man who cannot grasp it should give up such questions and confine himself to crossword puzzles.

What I have said about things being a cluster of "behaviours," applies with equal strength to "reality." This is a form of magical dope which modern religi-

onists take very freely themselves, and dole out generously to others. But what does it mean? There are the things we know. Apparently they do not constitute "reality"; they are not real. Well, what is real? It must be something we do *not* know. More, it must be something we never can know, because so soon as we know it, it must "*behave*" and when it behaves, Mr. Haslett says it is telling us nothing at all about what it really is, because "Science is helpless to explain the nature of reality." We must then for ultimate knowledge, fall back upon the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Bishop of London, and General Booth. They are greater than science. Their knowledge goes deeper than science. We know nothing that is real apart from their disclosures. The men and women we know, the things we see and feel and hear are not real and never can be real. We are not surprised that those who can swallow this sort of stuff in the name of philosophy can swallow anything in the name of religion.

A journalistic friend of mine once described the *Morning Post* as one of the best edited newspapers in the country, written for the benefit of the most hopelessly ignorant people in Britain.

What Of Religion?

But the most curious complaint that Mr. Haslett brings against science is the tail-end of his article. He says:—

The obvious corollary is, that science can tell the world a great deal less about religion than is generally supposed. . . . If we want reassurance as to the purpose of man, we can only turn to religion—or ourselves.

I am not quite certain as to what is meant in saying that it is only by turning from science to "ourselves," we can understand religion, unless it is a latter-day version of the Indian practice of sitting in all solemnity, contemplating one's navel, in order to reach the truth about "reality." But the statement that science can tell us little about religion, is distinctly untrue. It is science that in the

fields of anthropology sociology, and psychology has told us everything about religion that is worth the knowing. What would the world have known of the origin of the belief in gods, or a soul, or a future life, but for science? But for science we should have been still whipping lunatics to drive the devils out of them; still burning old women for witchcraft; still expecting miracles instead of seeking the factors in an act of natural causation. The only genuine understanding of religion we possess has been given us by science. Mr. Haslett repudiates "the idea of proving the distinctive beliefs of religion either from the data of physical science or by the methods of physical science." The data of physical science, admitted, but the methods of physical science is another question. For the scientific method is the same all round, the subject matter naturally requiring different modes of operation. And it is by the scientific method—the patient collection of facts, their careful classification, and the generalizations derived from the classification, that constitutes the main features of a scientific method. The trouble is, so far as the religious world is concerned, not that science is unable to deal with religion, but that within two or three generations it has been so successful in its task that the nature of religion is plain to all who will read the record aright. Mr. Haslett is not pleading for an *understanding* of religion. He is asking that in the case of religion any attempt at understanding shall be set on one side. And, after all, there is no other plan by which religion can be kept in being.

The *Church Times*, commenting on the meetings of the British Association, says, after paying tribute to the "careful, consistent devotion to truth" of science, and its readiness to sit "at the feet of the facts" :—

There are some facts that science cannot see, facts which, because of the inevitable limitations of scientific method, do not exist for the scientist, as such.

Which, as a gentleman named Euclid

said a long time ago of something else, is absurd. The *Church Times* is careful to avoid mentioning what are the facts that science cannot see, and with which, if it did, it cannot deal. It does say that "science aims at being objective," but *objective* here is, I fancy, used by the writer in one sense, and is to be understood by his readers in another and a different sense. It is true that science aims at being objective in the sense that it will have nothing to do with the talk of a "truth" that cannot be so exhibited as to demonstrate its reality to others. It does not believe in the kind of truth that can only be established by a contemplative study of one's navel, and which must then be accepted by others with no solid testable evidence. That is, and always has been, the favourite method of the charlatan and the trickster. But if we are asked to believe that science is confined to "objective" as opposed to "subjective" facts then the statement is simply not true. The trouble, so far as the religious world is concerned, is that science *does* deal with subjective, or what religious people call, "spiritual" things, and in a way that is fatal to religious claims.

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Manoeuvring For Position

We are warned that science is prevented from seeing or dealing with certain things because of the "inevitable limitations of scientific method." This is either nonsense leading to confusion, or confusion leading to nonsense; it depends upon which side one makes the approach. Of course, science does not attempt to gauge the nature of a sensation with a pair of scales created for determining weight, nor would it measure sound with a spectroscope. The *tools* used by science alter with the subject-matter under examination. The *method* of science remains the same under all conditions. And the objection religion raises to science is not so much motivated by an objection to the method employed as it is to the nature of the conclusions reached. The proof of the truth of this is that it was always to the actual evidence produced by science that the Christian Church objected. The

Church was on much more logical ground when it applied its authority to *all* facts. It commenced its career with a definite teaching concerning man and the world; and for many centuries it held to those teachings. It was as definite and as dogmatic with regard to the truth of the biblical account of the origin of languages, the creation of the globe, or the revolution of the sun round the earth, as it was with regard to the nature of the soul, the power of prayer, and the objective nature of the visions seen by "saints."

It was when, in the face of the fiercest opposition from the Church, science made good its claim to state the truth to the world about the world and man, that two lines of defence were laid down. The first was a tentative one: admitting the truth of scientific teachings that could no longer be profitably disputed. It was the method of the pickpocket when a policeman catches him with another person's purse in his hand "It's a fair cop, I'll go quietly." The Church was content to admit as true what it could no longer profitably denounce as false. But continuance in that plan developed dangers. For science did not stand still, and every advance threatened a diminution of the territory over which theology ruled. Science was unconsciously following the British method of Empire-building—squatting, creation of territorial rights, and finally, annexation. Unless something were done science would presently leave theology with no territory over which it might exercise rule.

So another plan was adopted. Science was to be given its own field of operations. But there was another field, that of "spiritual experience," the visions of saints and of men like Swedenborg; the "illumination" not to be expressed in precise language; all this it was thought science could not touch, and was to be the permanent stronghold of religion. In a way religion was getting back to its primitive condition, for in effect it was giving over to science all that was known, or ever could be known, even everything considered capable of definite concep-

tion, and claiming as its own inalienable possession, everything that would forever remain unknown and inconceivable. So was created the stupid theory of two worlds—one in which things were known or knowable that belonged to science, and another world consisting of, not merely the unknown, but the unknowable, that belonged to religion. The strength of the latter position was that, provided religion kept to things that could not be handled, no one was able to prove that what was said concerning these things was untrue.

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The "Facts" Of Religion.

This is really all that the statement of the *Church Times*, means. For what are the facts of the religious life to which the scientific method cannot be applied? I do not know of one. The conviction that there is a God, the sense of union with God, the belief that one gets help in trouble from an invisible source, the desire for a future life, the belief in inspiration, the belief in heaven and hell, the feeling that one is helped by prayer, and so forth; are these the facts of the religious life with which science cannot deal? If this is what is meant, then I can only reply plainly and categorically that it is demonstrably false. There is not one of these things, from the visions of a Swedenborg to the ravings of a religiously drunken travelling evangelist with which science finds itself unable to deal, and concerning which precise information is not being given to the world day by day. I wonder whether it is possible to get the editor of the *Church Times* to say in plain language just what it is in religion to which the scientific method cannot be applied, and why? If he cannot spare the space in his own journal this one is open to him.

Always behind such expressions as those used by the *Church Times* rests the assumption that there are certain phenomena associated with religion that lie outside the scope of science. The truth is, however, that scientific knowledge and the application of the scientific method do not meet religion with a bare rejection,

they (to use an expression of John Morley's) "explain religion out of existence." Science accepts all the facts upon which religion is based, and absorbs them into the scientific explanation of human history. No scientific student of religion questions the existence of a group of facts upon which religion has built its doctrines. The belief in God or gods is one fact the belief in a soul and a future life is another fact; so is the belief in inspiration, in the power of prayer, in miracles, in heaven and hell, in rewards and punishments in a future life, in the assumed inspiration of favoured people, in the belief that a better life may be derived from religion. To the true scientist, delusions and illusions, mistaken conclusions, and false inferences, are all facts of human nature that need accounting for as much as do the phenomena with which the science of physics busies itself. It is the non-recognition of this aspect of the situation that leads the religious advocate to spend his time beating the air, and attacking a position which to the scientific Freethinker simply does not exist.

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Science And Life

Let me give one or two illustrations of what I mean. About twenty years ago I published a work (*Religion and Sex*) in which the whole of the phenomena of religion was considered from the point of view of an acceptance of the psychological facts, and an explanation of them was offered in terms of existing scientific knowledge. To that work no reply has ever been made, nor do I anticipate that any will be made. That book did not "attack" religion, it explained it. Meanwhile religious advocates continue to write about religion as though we were living in the eighteenth century instead of in the twentieth. The only "advance" made is that of quietly dropping certain religious doctrines, and writing of religious beliefs in a more restrained manner, and so leaving it to be inferred that the religion advocated is the same as that which has been thrown overboard.

Those acquainted with the facts know full well that science deals drasti-

cally with religion. Science is in no doubt as to the origin of either the belief in God and a soul. It *knows*, despite disputes over theories and the particular order of development, that all existing ideas of God and a soul can be traced back to the mistaken interpretation by primitive man of phenomena that are now differently and adequately explained. This being so the problem is no longer one of evidence, it is one of psychology and sociology—that of understanding the condition which gave rise to such beliefs, and the sociological conditions that favoured their perpetuation. Science does not question the existence of certain states of what is called ecstasy, or a sense of oneness with some mysterious and unknown power; it merely points out that religious beliefs have, more and more intimately as we go back in the history of mankind, been associated with the presence of abnormal mental states, either induced by fasting, or by the practice of drug-taking, or by various other methods, all of which tended to induce a conviction of association with "spiritual" powers. And the scientist also points out that all of these states can now be paralleled by states that are admittedly perfectly natural in their origin, and which are dealt with in thousands of instances without ever considering religion in any way. For thousands of years (it is still the case with uncivilized peoples), both bodily and mental diseases were associated with the work of evil spirits. The New Testament is quite definite on this point. To-day science takes these same states and shows them to be due to quite natural and understandable conditions. And I put the question quite directly to the *Church Times*: In what way do we differentiate between the abnormal mental state induced by indulgence in a drug or in alcohol, and those induced by fasting, solitary meditation, or the starved sexual life of a male or female saint? In what substantial particular do the visions of a shipwrecked mariner differ from those of a monk leading a starved unwholesome life in a desert or in what is practically

(Continued on page 201.)

REASON ALONE CAN TRANSFORM MAN

A PLEA FOR SANE AND RIGHT THINKING

BY

Dr. C. L. D'AVOINE

(Reproduced from the "SUNDAY STANDARD")

In his informative little book: *The Supremacy of Reason* W. Nicol Reid writes "It seems to me that if people could only be brought to look the whole position in the face, and to see how really tragic is our failure to rise to our true power and dignity as beings endowed with reason, there would be a general search for more trustworthy methods of forming opinions, and a general movement in the direction of saner, juster, and more coherent views on many of the questions and problems of the day. And this saner and juster thought would in time effect an almost miraculous transformation alike in the inner life of the individual and in the organized activities of society.

It would make itself an enormous power for good in sweetening our manners and elevating our morals, as well as in stimulating and making effective our efforts for the common welfare. It would exercise a definite inhibitive influence on the anti-social impulses whose nature and origin it alone satisfactorily explains, and lead men to harness their energies with generous enthusiasm to the general forward movement of the race, thus striking at the very root of the perverted ethic under whose arbitrary and demoralizing yoke the world has so long groaned. Nor would it be easy to foresee and set out in detail one-tenth of the consequences which would result from the general diffusion of a truthful spirit, and from the gradual elevation of the tone of popular thought."

If what is quoted above is true of all peoples, it is particularly more so of Indians who by constitution and racial inheritance are prone to being afflicted by the deadly mental inertia of traditionalism, morbid conservatism, mysti-

cism, and the dicta of self-constituted authorities.

The overwhelming power of traditionalism here, in India, is proverbial as is also the prevailing mysticism which many mistake for spiritual gifts. The sentimental and emotional nature of the Indians makes them fall easily into irrationalism and urges them to perpetuate much that is harmful, obstructive and unprogressive.

We see this at work here in many directions at present. For instance, under a false idea of nationalism and deep reverence for the past, many are actually clamouring for a return to the ancient civilization of the land, whatever is understood by this: back to the jungle and the perpetuation of archaic social customs and habits. As a case in point, one could very well single out India as the only country in the world which desires to revive, encourage and perpetuate the so-called indigenous systems of medicine in order to preserve and glorify one of the characteristics of Hindu ancient culture and also that of the Muslims!

As Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru rightly says: "The real struggle to-day in India is not between Hindu culture and Muslim culture, but between these two and the conquering scientific culture of modern civilization."

The protagonists for the revival of these primitive, obsolete, systems of medicine advance many reasons to justify this curious claim of theirs. At bottom, the only reason, indeed, is to satisfy a maudlin sentimentality and the fantastic belief that ancient India was more advanced in the science of medicine and in other things than is the West

at present. A belief that only lunatics can entertain.

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The power to use one's reason properly, which leads to clear and sane thinking would probably have saved many Indians from falling into such absurdities which make other people laugh heartily at them. It would also help to solve many problems which require solution in this country. For instance, in none would the right use of reason and clear thinking be more efficacious and welcome than in the religious contradictions, antagonism, and dissensions that create such difficulties and troubles in India. As a matter of fact, most competent observers attribute the troubles and backwardness of India down to this one cause alone—religion—and, strange to say, this is precisely the very thing in which most Indians take the greatest pride and devote most of their activities!

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A country whose people cannot utilise their reason properly must for ever remain in the rear-guard of civilization. The right use of reason is the only gift with which Mother Nature has endowed men for their uplift and advancement. It is the only instrument of thought that can emancipate them and save them from those who would enslave their minds and bodies. Despite this well-recognised fact, there are still many who do not believe in the supremacy of reason as the highest mental gift man possesses. Because most of these people having been sedulously taught by designing teachers to be suspicious of reason, we often hear them say that reason is not the only "faculty" in us, and that there are such things as common sense, faith, emotion and intuition which must be taken into consideration to account and explain the mental make-up of people.

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They say that reason, after all, is not infallible and unerring and it may lead us into error. This is no doubt quite true, but certainly not to the extent unscrupulous religious teachers are fond of telling their followers. Our reason is cer-

tainly not infallible, but all the same, it is the only instrument we possess which is provided with the necessary adjustments for the effective prosecution of the search for truth. As Nicol Reid truly says, "For, although we make for it no claim to inerrancy, we know that it has extraordinary powers of self-correction which are shared by no other faculty of which we are possessed. As to its alleged or actual aberrations there are two things to be said."

* * * *

"In the first place, the errors that creep into our reasoning can be quite clearly traced, for the most part, not to reason itself, but to bias, prejudice and emotional indiscipline. Such errors are to be avoided and combated not by reasoning less or less rigorously, but by reasoning more strictly and more extensively and by reducing to a minimum the personal equation with its egotistic promptings."

"Secondly, reason has extraordinary powers peculiar to itself and capable of indefinite extension, of controlling, criticising and correcting its own operations. It can be made to respond in a manner truly marvellous to a well-considered course of discipline and training."

The same cannot be said of the other faculties or substitutes for reason which by their faulty operations often distort the straight course of reason.

* * * *

Take the case of Faith. Those who undervalue reason often tell us that faith transcends reason and is more to be trusted than the latter. By Faith, they, of course, mean religious faith which they consider is a divine gift vouchsafed by divine grace to those who deserve it. This is a pure invention of priest-craft, especially when it is insisted that one of the greatest misfortunes that can befall a believer is to lose this "divine grace," faith in spiritual things. Others taunt the rationalists that, after all, they also must have faith in some things; for instance, in scientific authorities.

One must certainly have faith in some things or in some authorities, for

one must rely on such authorities for many things of which one cannot have personal knowledge.

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But to have faith in, say, a scientific authority whose claims or teaching one can closely verify, is a different thing from having faith in the *ipse dixit* of somebody who advances claims which no one can verify. Spiritual authorities belong to this category. Scientific authorities, in whom we repose our faiths for the things they teach, belong to a special class of investigation claiming respectful attention, or at least a fair hearing, for their findings with regard to certain matters of fact, on the ground that they have evolved specially accurate and adequate methods of investigation, that they apply them with scientific precision and thoroughness and that they are willing to submit their procedure and conclusions to the most rigorous possible tests. A scientific truth can never be a dogma which one is bound to accept because an authority says so.

Faith in the so-called spiritual verities claims to be above reason, though those who teach this must themselves appeal to reason to explain their doctrines and justify their faith. It is only when one disagrees with the reason they advance that they scoff at one's private reason and claim that faith is above reason. They call one who uses his reason and questions their teaching to be a person puffed up with intellectual pride and they claim that no one can arrive at the truth without being assisted by their guidance !

* * * *

Those who have not been disciplined in scientific reasoning take pride in their common sense which they believe is sufficient to guide them in matters that require deep probing. Although it is undoubtedly a valuable gift to possess much common sense, it cannot, by any means, usurp the place of sound reason in clear and right thinking. Holding fast as a rule to the customary, the safe and the obvious, the person who possesses it

and only depends on it is not easily carried away either for good or evil by novel theories or ingenious speculations. He thus avoids at once the risk of falling into new errors and the possibility of liberating himself from old ones. Such a person is prone to look with easy contempt on the reasoned conclusions of the trained thinker and trust to his own often erroneous judgment.

* * * *

We need hardly say anything here about emotion and intuition which are believed to be substitutes for reason. Both have the power to seriously disturb the mind and blur its clarity. The unthinking masses, with strong herd instincts, are generally swayed by these two "faculties" and the absence of reason in them is taken advantage of by pretenders, charlatans, dictators and other enemies of mankind to further their own ends. This is the reason why such people are often the enemies of sound education and believe in keeping the masses ignorant.

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FASCISM AND SOCIAL PROGRESS

BY

K. T. CHANDY

(Continued from Page 114)

The Armistice Day with its ceremonial and flag-waving has come and gone, but humanity is more than ever before on the brink of a catastrophe that might well-nigh set the clock of progress back by a hundred years. World fascism has, during the last three months, trailed a bloody path towards the accomplishment of its heinous plot against the freedom and peace of the peoples of the world. Thanks to the policy, followed by the imperialist allies of Fascism, of openly and cynically disregarding the rules of international law and the principles of collective security and indivisibility of peace, the greatest fraud of contemporary history has been perpetrated against the democratic people of Spain, in the form of a fictitious non-intervention. A wholly one-sided intervention by Fascism amounting in fact to an Italian and German invasion of Spain, to-day masquerades as non-intervention.

In the East, Japan, the military-Fascist Empire of the Pacific, encouraged by the pro-Fascist policy of Western Imperialisms, has set out to rob China of her freedom and culture by murder, pillage and arson. No sooner had civilized mankind expressed its horror at this wanton destruction of human life, liberty and culture, than the three main Fascist powers of Italy, Germany and Japan, combined in open defiance of public opinion, international morality and the forces of progress. The Rome-Berlin-Tokio axis expresses the intentions of Fascist powers to convert their experiences of non-intervention in Spain into a technique for world conquest. They propose to stand by each other in diplomacy and military aid whenever any one or all of them intervene in the affairs of a nation and proceed to destroy the democratic people of that nation and their free government in the name of a holy crusade against socialism. It is their technique to subsidize the most reac-

tionary elements in every country, to arm them, to raise the bogey of communism and intervene in the internal affairs of that country and finally to annex it to their own empire. This is a cleverly worked out policy spelling irreparable disaster to civilization, but its success depends upon the imperialist allies of Fascism playing the criminal role of Pilate in non-intervention committees. This is no time for hysterics or despair. The issue is grave; the peace, freedom, and culture of the world are at stake; the forces of Progress must unite without delay and stand firm for collective security, indivisibility of peace, international morality and social justice.

The finger-post of Fascism points no less to a caste-corporative mediaeval dictatorship and racial sadism than to imperialism and war. Attention has been drawn in the last article to its destruction of even parliamentary democracy, while the path of progress lies in widening out a narrow political democracy into a politico-economic democracy. Attention has also been drawn to Fascism's argument in justification of dictatorship that the 'non-possessing toilers of the world are not fit to govern, as they are people who see the meaning of life only in vulgar sensual feelings and, the satisfaction of immediate demands' and that 'the nation is a living organism—a divine dispensation—in which the possessing classes are the organs chosen by the gods to perform the noble functions of deliberation and execution, while the other classes are the ignoble organs, meant to obey the noble organs'. In this conception of a divine division of society into the rich section chosen to rule and the poor section chosen to obey, lies the caste-corporative character of Fascism.

An assertion that the rich alone are endowed with talents for creative work and thought or that they are as a rule talented or that the talented are always

rich or get rich would be a gross travesty of facts. Few of the greatest artists, philosophers or scientists have sprung from the ranks of the rich nor did many of them ever become rich. The vast millions of the world's toilers have created and are creating with their sweat and bone-breaking exertions the means by which modern civilization is continued. Among them are to-day submerged many a great talent, suppressed, beaten down and denied all opportunities of expression. To say that talent is synonymous with riches would be to slander this vast reservoir of humanity which has formed the bulk of mankind, produced the whole material basis of civilization and has made the greatest contributions to culture. Yet this is what Fascism does and its ideal is a society divided into two permanent castes, the rich ruling and the poor servile. The sinister purpose of this is to keep the mass of toilers as wage-slaves without power of expression and organisation for the profit of a coterie of monopoly capitalists.

The inherent antithesis between the interests of the exploited and the exploiters, of the possessing and the non-possessing, is sought to be refuted by Fascism through its "organic" conception of the phenomenon "Nation". "The Italian nation is an organism which follows vital aims and disposes of means of activity which stand higher than the aims and means of the isolated incorporated individuals of whom the nation consists. In the Fascist State the complete moral, political and economic solidarity of all is realized". (Carta del Lavoro). Here is a mystic conception of nation and society. What can be the aims of such an Italian Nation? Naturally we turn to the economic, political and cultural activities promoted or allowed in modern Italy which is under the control of the adherents of this conception. We find the working classes pressed into a system of wage-slavery. Their right to organise independent trade unions, to strike work in defence of their demands, and to freely express their opinions on matters of economic and political policy is totally

denied. The institution of private property in the means of production and distribution is maintained intact, while the number of those who have a share in the ownership of these means of production has reached its lowest possible level, 5% or so of the total population. The position of the middle classes has been steadily deteriorating ever since the advent of Fascism in Italy and to-day we have in that country a full-fledged monopoly capitalism. Professor Brady in his Book on Fascism has analysed fully the economic system of a Fascist State showing conclusively its plutocratic nature. If, therefore, the monopoly capitalists of Italy control the destiny of that country and they follow a policy of aggressive destruction of working-class organisations and centralization of all economic activities under their financial control; the aim and purpose of the mystical Italian nation as is evidenced now is immediately seen in its hideous form stripped of all its glossy covering. The real purpose of this conception and its advocacy are to obscure the class antagonisms inherent in capitalist society, to divert the attention of the Italian workers from the path of a stern fight for social justice and to drug the whole people with a bellicose nationalism so as to make them the instruments for the achievement of the imperialist aims of monopoly capitalists.

The organic conception of "Nation" inevitably leads to imperialism. "The main aim of the nation as a mystical metaphysical whole permeated with the consciousness of its special mission on earth, is the creation of a powerful state as the perfect foundation and complete embodiment of the national consciousness. The main essence of the Fascist state lies in its continual activity, in a trial of strength in the manifestation of its might". (Debosin). Hitler talks of the special mission of the Germans to conquer the territories of the inferior races and impose Germanic culture on them. Mussolini, too, talks of the special mission of Italy to conquer the territories of Africans and subject them to the Italian

culture. The idea of peace to which they adhere is the peace of a world subjected to their respective imperial despotism. The special mission of Fascism is never one to be achieved by the force of reason but invariably by brute force. The special task to-day of all progressive forces is to suppress this hydra-headed monster of Fascism.

"Culture and civilization are inextricably bound up with the Aryans", says Hitler in his book *Main Kampf*. He further declares "in waging war against the Jews, I am fighting for the cause of God". Mussolini shrieks from house-tops that the Italians are a chosen race superior to the Africans and to the people of every other country which is coveted by Italian imperialists. The Japanese fascists boast that they are the direct descendants of the Son God—the people chosen to be responsible for the policing of the East. The claim of every fascist country that its own peoples are the chosen race, that their God is the supreme God, and that the peace and progress of the world lie in the subjugation, if not extermination of every other race, makes clear the ridiculous fallacy of the conception of a chosen race, the imperialist barbarity and racial sadism inherent in fascism, and the purely human origin of God.

No pure race is to be met with anywhere on earth and 'world-culture' is not the contribution of any one particular race or people. At a time when the progress of science and commerce has made the entire human society one economic organism, the predominating and over-riding factor in social life operating throughout the world and uniting similar forces across racial, geographical and political barriers, is the conflict between the economic interests of the exploiters and the exploited. Imperialism, fascism and socialism, are not confined to any particular hemisphere. During the last war, certain imperialist powers of the West combined with those of the East against a similar combination. To-day fascists have united from different quarters of the globe and so have the socialists. The imperialists of the world stand united against the developing unity of the colo-

nial masses. The sinister purposes underlying this new advocacy of racialism are to divide the ranks of the exploited of the earth and to camouflage the imperial ambitions of fascist states against the countries of the so-called inferior races.

Rationalism is an anathema to the fascists and naturally, too, because Reason is the unfailing weapon with which mankind sooner or later overcomes oppression and the obscurantist philosophy of the oppressors. Oswald Spingler, the German fascist, says that we can know only the "appearance" of things through Reason, while the essence of things can only be penetrated with the help of divine contemplation. The striving of man to discover with the aid of reason the inner connections of phenomena and to control the social life so as to ensure equality of opportunity to everybody is depreciated by Spingler as a wicked and futile attempt to overthrow the inevitable forces of fate which according to him overhang life. He declares that Reason slays the idea of fate, whereas the man of "organic culture" must recognise the idea of fate and submit before it. His conception of the universe seems to be a multitude of things in chaos controlled by a whimsical and blind destiny. He sees no process of evolution in matter or life and he discovers no broad principles in the working of history with the aid of which man could be a conscious agent in process of evolution. The "essence of things" as he has known with the aid of his "divine contemplation" is no essence at all, for he cries in despair that a blind fate controls everything, the working of which is inscrutable. The enthronement of ignorance, a resignation to the iniquities of present day social life, and a chaos of emotions are the social ideals of this great fascist. The necessity of fascism for such a philosophy, by which they could condemn the strivings of the toiling masses for a just social system, is obvious.

The deification of irrationalism leads Spingler to declare that man is a beast of prey (*Der Mensch ist ein Raubtier*) and that the progress of man lies

in giving full play to his primitive instincts. He declares that only the soul can know the feeling of **rapture** a man experiences in plunging his knife into the warm and living body of an enemy. Here is an open advocacy that conscious and reasoned thought must give way to liberated feelings, to the chaos of desires with their primitive striving towards violence against the weak! This is what fascism stands for in its programme of imperialist conquest, in its idealization of war, in its militarisation of schools and its ruthless persecution of everybody who stands for a just social system.

The attack on science and materialism is the necessary corollary to fascism's attack on reason. Materialism should in this connection be understood as the philosophy which considers the universe as an objective reality. Some of the great scientists of the world like Einstein have been driven out of the country. The study of science and the scientific method of thinking is increasingly replaced by drills and marches and military training. No scientific research which does not seek to multiply the instruments of war receives encouragement from the fascist state.

No piece of scientific thought has been attacked so virulently by fascists as the principle of evolution. Darwin's books have been burnt in public streets in Germany. If progressive evolution is a scientific fact, fascism can easily be demonstrated to be a desperate attempt of the reactionary elements in contemporary society to retard the historical force of progress and further it will become clear that ere long it must break up under the onslaught of the progressive forces in the world. These are the ideas which strike at the root of fascism. Otto Strausser, one of the former leaders of Nazism, says "the materialist outlook has, as is well-known, the idea of progress as one of its motive forces. There is no worse sort of fatalism than this spiritual hallucination that humanity for millions of years now has been marching along this road which leads ever upwards, which is decorated on right and left with the milestones of development.

How has this fixed idea become possible? Surely everyone knows that life is a circle and not a straight line". (quoted by Debosin in the book 'Marxism and Modern Thought'). The thousands of years of human life on this planet does not mean to Strausser any evolution of man from a helpless sport of Nature to a proud harnesser of many forces of Nature, but to him those years show only a movement on the same plane in a vicious circle. Frankly they thus admit that fascism is on the same plane as primitive life.

A society that compels women to undergo semi-military training and then reduces them to the position of mere child-bearing institutions may be well fitted to create a huge army but it is certainly not one which can foster the development of culture or the finer sentiments in man. Nazism has reduced the number of women allowed in universities to a proportion of one woman for every ten men. It sends them all to the quasi-military labour camps, denies them opportunities of employment and calls upon them to confine themselves to children, church and kitchen.

To sum up, fascism is an organisation of social decay which stands for war, imperialism, dictatorship in the interests of monopoly capitalism, a caste-corporative mediaeval society, racial sadism, suppression of reason, philosophical obscurantism and cultural reaction. All lovers of social progress must unite to save human society from this evil force.

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HELPS TO WORLD FELLOWSHIP THROUGH THE EDUCATION OF UNIVERSAL YOUTH

BY

FREDERICK J. GOULD

*Address delivered at a meeting of the World Fellowship of Faiths held at the
Whitefield Institute, Tottenham Court Road, London. July, 1937.*

I begin by denouncing the unbeliever. The most pitiable infidel is the man who does not love, and does not feel faith, in universal youth; the youth of all races—Coloured Races (upon whom be blessing!) and the White (upon whom be blessing!). If this man is interested in a creed and a scripture, and not interested in the girls and boys who dance round our globe, he is a dull-wit who prefers a dead leaf to a living flower. For youth implies re-birth, renewal, refreshing, religion. Youth is our prime safeguard against hindrances. The hindrances are poverty, cruelty, slavery, disease, ignorance; and as to ignorance the blackest type is ignorance of the essential one-ness of the human heart beneath all outward differences of body and custom. Yet another hindrance is that of words. Often, when souls are in tune for love, service, order, beauty, progress, the souls are parted by the words of a creed. Of course we need words. But I believe the evolution of man during tens of thousands of years has unfolded a universal religion without words, and to-day our words—our words of God, Truth, Prayer, Morality—must be humble servants of that vital movement "toward the Best." So now I say no more of hindrances. If there were no hindrances, we should not come together seeking fellowship. Let the doors be flung open to all—Buddhists, Confucians, Hindus, Muslims, Parsees, Jews, Christians, Shintoists, Unitarians, Rationalists, Humanists. I for one can think of no other sure basis for the universal education than this universal basis that reaches from Tokio to Chicago, Moscow to Rome, North Pole to South Pole. That is why I turn to the history of the universal man; the story—the poem, the Bible, the music—of his life through the long

ages. In this revelation, this life-revelation, I find the dynamic of education. Is world fellowship our ideal? Yes; but why have we the courage and faith to point to the radiant star of this ideal? It is because the poem of history discloses real, actual, undeniable energies of love, service, co-operation, beauty, in humanity's past and present. By revealing those actual energies of past and present we educate. We invite youth to join the grand march, to renew, to release, to reform, to re-construct. Is it our duty to advise, to admonish? Yes; but not our fundamental duty. Our fundamental duty is to show the glories that have happened, and are now happening; and then we say: 'Your ancestors did these things yesterday; your elder comrades are doing these things to-day; and you?'"

What are the glories? For the sake of brevity and simplicity I will speak of them as eight. They will make eight stories, requiring years to tell:—(1) The story of womanhood, above all as motherhood; the central figure of evolution, pouring from her golden cup the stream of nurturing kindness;—(2) The story of childhood as a social and moral factor; an easy story, for, as I have ventured to tell an International Congress at Paris, there is but one child in the world;—(3) The story of the labourer, the sweating Titan of the centuries, often martyr, and so often in the olden days a silent slave;—(4) The story of our animal friends, whose domestication in primitive times was one of the greatest magics of history;—(5) The story of the organizer, as engineer, captain, administrator, builder, planner;—(6) The story of the idealist, as prophet, saint, reformer, artist, discoverer;—(7) The story

of the nation, as a powerful servant of civilization; for, as a great Italian (Mazzini) said: "Nations are the citizens of humanity, as individuals are the citizens of the nation";—(8) The story of the various races, Asiatic, African, European, all; each giving its genius, valour, suffering, and its smile of membership, to the far-stretched human whole. Those are the eight glories, eight types. I cry shame on the stupid teacher who mechanically recites the types to youth. These types constitute a supreme drama; and you know drama—as pageantry, procession, play, celebration, festival—was in its splendid birth an utterer of religion. So education will present the enchanting stories (or, really, the one history) in simple drama, poems, folklore, anecdote, biography, picture, model, symbol, legend, fairy-tale, dance, mime, music;—the demon of "Examination" being chained all the while in an underground dungeon. In thus outlining the supreme drama, I am not limiting the contributions to any aristocracy of civilization. Naturally, we draw from the treasures of Japan, China, India, Persia, Arabia, Europe, and the great colonial migrations of Europe. It is our Fellowship duty—it is part of our religious sociology—to include ample illustrations from the life of primitive clans, tribes, nomads; Red Men, Pacific Islanders, African negroes, Bantu, Yorubas, and the rest. The drama of humanity, as unveiled by the educator, is not acted in a cathedral, or mosque, or temple by a chosen class. It is a universal drama, best understood by a universal faith.

Let me picture the drama in a quite different way from that of the Eight Types. I would ask the educator to direct his lessons (that is to say, his inspiration) along five lines of human social and moral energy, as marked by the course of history. Each line or road thrills with the glories of human achievement. I am obliged to declare that, to trace these lines effectively before the eyes and imagination of youth, a long and happy training that opens in home and infant school must run on to the years of adolescence and the gate of manhood and

womanhood. Why not? Is civilization too poor to train its eager and robust youth to ages 18 or 21, in spiritual and practical preparation for social service?

The first dramatic line is that of man's dealings with nature without, whether as a learner by exploration on land and sea, and in anxious watching of the starry heavens, or as a worker in agriculture, forestry, mining. In this phase of history the Greeks symbolized man's bravery and devotion by the myth of Prometheus, who stole fire from heaven and endured the agony of torture, and yet at last gained liberty, and was reverently honoured by Greek festivals. In similar folk-lore every section of the human race has invented charming stories of man's relation to earth, air, fire, water, plants, animals. For later years of education, add the record of farming, bread-making, wool, cotton, coal, oil and the rest; and it all makes an epic of heroism, co-operation and social service. Under the guidance of the educator, youth can joyously learn how all races and nations have laboured in this wonderful sphere, and how they can more and more assist each other and cheer each other.

The second dramatic line is that of industrial crafts, machinery, commerce; and every corner of the earth in some way or other illustrates this activity. Such industry, with agriculture, constitutes the material basis on which poetry and religion build their temples. One of the great Faiths reveres a divine Carpenter. Is not that a challenging reminder that it is a vital task of religion to consecrate the economic basis, the material basis? Would education lose dignity if it taught youth to link, in unbreakable association, the ideas of universal industry, universal wealth, universal fellowship? Would religion lose dignity? Does not the genius of the True, the Beautiful, the Good—however mystically radiant its face—need a humble earthen floor to stand on?

The third dramatic line is that of the fashioning of beauty in the many expressions of art, in poetry, music, dance, imaginative literature, architecture, sculp-

ture, painting, pottery, costume, gardening and the rest. Some day, education will use a magnificent apparatus of kinema, radio, and television to show universal youth how men—men who in mad moments shed each other's blood—are yet, in every region of the globe, lovers and makers of beauty. Education will cry aloud to the universal young Fellowship: "You can make the whole earth a beautiful home!"

The fourth dramatic line is that of the sciences. These sciences, from mathematics and astronomy to biology, hygiene, ethics and education, are man's scheme of "laws" by which he more or less understands nature without and human nature within. They all rest on common sense—on the universal effort to understand life. They are not essentially the scheme of civilization. In primitive tribes of the forest the urge to understanding exists, and youth should be made acquainted with the attempts of Early Man and primitive tribes, as well as the complicated work of the Galileos, the Faradays, the Avicennas, and the Boses of Calcutta. Youth should also be quickened by the noble idea that the benefits of the sciences will in time be extended to the whole of mankind.

The fifth dramatic line is that of social love, order, progress; the life of the family, village, city, nation, race, globe; the life through the ages of economic and political development; the life that unfolds the delightful miracle of language; the life of the Faiths, — and here I plead that universal youth should learn, in simple outlines of biography, legend, parable and anecdote, the story of all the Faiths, theistic or plain ethical, in a spirit of respect toward all. It is on this fifth line or path of social life that we meet, in a vivid and connected group, those Eight Types of which I have spoken,—Womanhood, Childhood, Labourer and the rest. All the years of adolescence will pass before a quite effective conception of this enthralling history will be realized. But the first feeling of it can be born in the kindergarten. The little child who gazes at a

picture of the Greek Athene, the Italian Madonna, the Hindu Sita, the Kwanyin of China, begins—or **can** begin under the wise educator's guidance—the study of essential history. From such infantile thoughts the soul of youth travels to the frontier of philosophy, and the educated young man or woman can discuss the problem some of us discussed (1934) at the International Congress of Moral Education, when we met in Poland: "The moral forces common to every human being, their sources, and their development through education."

I wonder if any of you are asking the question: "Is this immense story, this history, to be added to the overcrowded curriculum and time-table of youth's school and college?" My answer is that I have already laid before you a complete plan of discipline of heart and mind. Every so-called "subject" has been covered. This greatest of all stories provides the material for reading, writing, language, art, sciences, civics, economics, and all the practical industries and activities which fit youth, at age 17 or 18 onwards, for social service, social

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apprenticeship, social co-operation, social ideals. Every so-called "subject" will thus be linked, as by silver threads of association, with the evolutionary drama of all the ages; for every achievement—of industry, craft, art, arithmetic, chemistry, politics, morality—is the result of a long-continued energizing of our fathers. The watch that marks our hours and seconds is the product many centuries of thought and experiment since man first made a sundial. The time-piece is a symbol of the whole of our civilization. The civilized world of to-day is the sequel to a million years of realistic prayer, a million years of toil, a million years of service, a million years of hope and faith struggling in blood and tears toward the universal fellowship—let me say a million years of religion. I trust you will catch my meaning when I say real education may handle a hundred

subjects, and yet have but one interest; it teaches only one lesson, the lesson of obedience to the grand impulse toward fellowship, and of enthusiasm in building a universal temple of beauty for that fellowship. The summons goes out to "all people that on earth do dwell," to the crowded cities, to the hut on the Arctic ice, to the tent under the Arabian palm. When will the genius of civilization take up this evangelic mission? I do not know. But I know that when it does take it up, and concentrates education in the inspiring story of man's march, youth will respond. Youth will cry to the genius of civilization: "Dear Mother, dear Father! I thank you for the story; now let me walk and run in the light; let me create!"

Armored, Woodfield Avenue,
Ealing, London, W, 5.

A LETTER AND A REJOINDER

30 Rodney Street,
Liverpool, 1.
28-6-37.

Dear Mr. Phillips,

It was extremely kind of you to send me a copy of your book "Progressive Revelation", which I have read with much interest. I must apologize for not having written at an earlier date to thank you for it.

So far as I can understand these matters—it is unlikely that an ethical code (professedly based on Platonism) will supersede organized religion for many centuries to come because the majority of mankind will for many years prefer the mystery of religion and the psychological satisfaction so easily obtainable by the return to a Father in times of trouble, to the much more difficult task of living a "good life" without the "comforts of religion"—and until we are sufficiently educated to live on the cold logic of an ethical code, it is probably necessary for the continuation of civili-

zation that religious beliefs as we know them at present, should continue to be taught to the masses.

In proof of this one can quote the Russians—who, after a period of Godlessness are now opening their Churches again, or the Germans, whose present regime with its substitution of an Aryan he-man for a Jewish Christ, is now meeting most determined opposition from the Roman Catholics.

Whilst your conclusions are of importance to scientists and few persons who have considered the matters to which you refer can disagree with your findings—they carry with them an element of danger, for they are destructive and not constructive, and, in my opinion, the peoples of this world are not nearly good enough Christians to be able to do without Christianity.

A few years ago I should have agreed most warmly with you in your decision to write of these matters. Now, when I am a little bit older I find myself so full of despair because of the appa-

rently everlasting beastliness of mankind that I feel that it does not matter if what the Churches teach is essentially wrong in detail—provided that they continue to point the way to an essential goodness and charity and brotherly love.

"The end", in this respect, seems to me to "justify the means"—it is not often that I find myself in agreement with the Jesuits!!

Any way, thank you for letting me have a copy of the book, and please forgive the frank criticisms of this letter.

I am, Yours sincerely,
(Sd|-) R.M.B. MacKenna.

"Montacute",
Pinelands, Cape Town.
1937.

Dear Dr. MacKenna,

Yours of 28-6-37., thanks.

I am glad to have your frank criticisms. In proof of your contention, that "for the continuation of civilization, religious beliefs as we know them at present, should continue to be taught to the masses", you cite certain happenings in Russia and Germany at this moment. I fail to follow you.

In Russia, whatever the Communist Dictator's motive may be in opening the Churches and showing more consideration for those who still remain believers, it is certainly not that he has come to the conclusion that the Greek Church is a necessary institution for the civilization and welfare of the Russian people. He will have far too lively a recollection of their barbarous and wretched existence under her sway. No! The "Godlessness" will continue.

In Germany, to conform with the anti-Semitic, anti-Christian, and militaristic tenets of the Nazi Dictator and his entourage, it is being proposed now to throw aside the Christian religion, and substitute an ancient Pagan religion of the Teuton tribes. Naturally the proposal

meets with strenuous opposition from the Christian Churches. I find no proof here that your opinion as to the necessity of a supernatural religion is correct; but I do find a notable instance of the prevalence of this opinion even among unbelievers, and of the queer and objectionable things to which it may lead. A Government holding this opinion is proposing to institute a religion the utter absurdity of which must be palpable to anyone having but the veriest nodding acquaintance with modern knowledge. The Christian religion has also, so many of us think, its absurdities, but it does, at least, profess "to point the way to an essential goodness and charity and brotherly love", little as it has succeeded in carrying out those precepts; but this religion of the Nazis neither professes to point to these ideals, nor could it ever conduct to them. It points hatred and strife. Peace on earth, good-will towards men has no place in its philosophy.

In Italy the Fascist Dictator is astute enough to keep in with the Church nowadays. He is not continuing a struggle which even Bismarck had to give up. Fascism badly needs religion, both as a support and as a mask. Surely that is the only reason religion is found to be a necessity by him.

Both Mussolini and Hitler practise the persecution of the free-thinking working class as it is their most strenuous, most genuine opponent. If you agree that Fascism and Nazism are far more likely to increase than decrease "the apparently everlasting beastliness of mankind", why fear that "findings" which give the truth about religions and create free-thinkers, "carry with them an element of danger"; surely they are constructive, not destructive.

No! I do not share your feeling of despair about the human race. Give human beings a fair chance of being decent, and bar the unfortunate born criminals, they will be decent. Give them the creed of the true Rationalist and Humanist, and the opportunity to prac-

tice it. At present the vast majority have neither the one nor the other.

Nor do I share your opinion regarding the need of false beliefs as dopes; besides, this somewhat Machiavellian and Jesuitical plan is, in these days, eventually doomed to failure. The spread of education is going to put a stop to it altogether. It is true, however, that there is also present sometimes a higher motive than that of keeping the poor and ignorant masses quiescent. You are not the only heretic who might say "the peoples of this world are not nearly good enough Christians to be able to do without Christianity." Those who have this low opinion of their fellow-men, and high opinion of Christianity, and who genuinely nurture the belief that the disappearance of supernaturalism will spell chaos (examined by me p.p. 204-7 of "The Churches and Modern Thought") are fully justified in discouraging naturalism. The tragedy is that they are completely mistaken, and that their mistake does a great deal of harm—is not in the service of man. That this unfortunate view is prevalent, I know only too well through personal experiences in the propagation of Rationalism. It largely accounts for the existence of so many silent sceptics; those, I mean, who seem to forget or fail to realize the debt they owe to Rationalism, and so remain deaf to entreaties for the help it so badly needs.

As I have already remarked, when dealing with this point in "Modern Knowledge and Old Beliefs" (p. 126) "it is only fair to assume that this silent person, woman or man, can have little or no knowledge of how human progress and happiness have suffered from religions and their exponents and ministers". His ignorance is not surprising, for there can be very few, however well informed on other branches of knowledge, who have the inclination or leisure to make themselves acquainted with the works that would enlighten them. Besides, owing partly to what amounts to a conspiracy of silence, and partly to several other reasons, the average individual as

often has not has never even heard of these works. I speak of such volumes as:—Buckle's "History of Civilization in England"; Lecky's "The Rise and Influence of Rationalism in Europe"; Hobhouse's "Morals in Evolution"; Westermarck's "The Origin and Development of the Moral Idea"; "Gibbon on Christianity"; Bradlaugh's "Humanity's Gain from Unbelief"; Hypatia Bradlaugh Bonner's "Christianity and Conduct"; Perrycoste's "Religion and Moral Civilization"; McCabe's "The Bible in Europe"; Cohen's "Religion and Sex"; Gowan White's "Religion of the Open Mind"; Julian Huxley's "Religion without Revelation", etc. etc. In a little book entitled "The Religion of To-morrow", published by Watts & Coy., and costing only a shilling, there is a friendly correspondence between H. H. Powers, Ph.D. and William Archer, which I am sure would interest you.

Referring again to your remark that my conclusions are "destructive and not constructive", please note that my book-

(Continued on page 202)

To Help the Best Cause

"*The Churches and Modern Thought* has probably made more converts to Freethought than any other book except Thomas Paine's *Age of Reason*. One chapter of the famous work, printed in bold type and covering over a hundred pages, is now being issued in revised and extended form under the title **CONCERNING PROGRESSIVE REVELATION.**"—*Literary Guide*, November, 1936.

Inviting in its print, its brevity, its clarity, and its price, and packed with information practically unknown to and well calculated to startle the average man, this little book is ideal as a mind-opener for the million, and withal singularly convincing.

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(Estd. 1931)

The Journal of The Rationalist
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5-12, Queen's Road,
Bombay.

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*All contributions should be addressed to the
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Bhatwadi, Bombay 4, and should reach the editor on
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*The writers of the articles in this journal are
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list Association of India. Concession rates to member.*

*Subscription for "Reason" Re. 1/8 & Foreign
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AT THE SECRETARY'S TABLE

**The Annual General Meeting of the
Rationalist Association of India will be
held on Sunday, 9th January, 1938 at
4-30 p.m. at Purohit's Cosmopolitan
Hall, Hornby Road, Fort, Bombay.**

**The meeting will be followed by
light refreshments and music at 5-30 p.m.
Tickets Re. 1/- each, at the entrance.**

One year has passed since we re-
started our activities and it is encouraging
to note that our membership is slowly

but steadily increasing, thanks to the
efforts of some of our enthusiastic mem-
bers.

Next year it will be possible to have
many more activities which will enable
us to further our aims and objects and
bring the members in closer contact.

It is indeed pleasing to learn that
some of our members are trying their
best to help us in having informal monthly
meetings and discussions and to promote
the social side of our Association.

We offer our warmest thanks to
Mr. J. M. Cooper, former secretary of
our Association and to Lt.-Col. K. C.
Sanjana for their donations of Rs. 50/-
and 25/- respectively to the **Reserve
Fund.**

Col. Sanjana in his long and very
interesting letter writes, "I am very plea-
sed that a Reserve Fund has been started
and hope that members and others in-
terested in the cause of Free Thought
will freely subscribe their mite to it.
Members should follow the example of
readers and other well-wishers of *Free-
thinker*, who about four years ago sub-
scribed within two years £8,000 for its
maintenance".

Controversies on subjects of interest
to rationalists took place in the columns
of some of the daily papers in Bombay.
It is pleasing to note that people of an
intellectual bent are taking interest in
Rationalism and cognate subjects. The
controversy on Darwinism appeared in
the columns of the *Times of India*.
Although it was not possible to carry on
the discussion as fully as may be desired,
a few anti-Darwinists were properly re-
futed.

The controversy on Rationalism
versus Religion is still going on in the
columns of the *Sunday Standard*.

We congratulate the papers concer-
ned for their broadmindedness in allow-
ing discussion on subjects generally
avoided by newspapers in India.

Having come to know that there is a "movement" in Bombay attacking Rationalism, an open challenge to them to meet the representatives of the R. A. I. in a public debate was published in the columns of two local papers. The challenge has not yet been accepted.

Mr. K. T. Chandy has been appointed official representative of the Rationalist Association of India in place of Mr. Rovshan Mahomed.

Mr. Chandy has also been appointed foreign representative and correspondent to **Reason**.

It is with deep regret that we learn the death of Mr. Kanayalal Vakil, the well-known art critic of Bombay. Most of our friends will remember his brilliant speech in support of Science in the debate on "Science vs. Religion" held under the auspices of the R.A.I. and the Rationalist Youth League, in April, 1935.

A film recently shown in one of the theatres in Bombay entitled "The Road Back" brings out the psychological effects of war. It has a powerful dialogue. The whole picture with the concluding shots showing the armament programmes and budgets of different nations bring to our mind with tremendous force the consequences of the way world events are pointing.

The Board of Censors has again kept true to its tradition, and we can only guess what we must have missed.

We have great pleasure in acknowledging the following subscriptions and extending a warm welcome to new members.

Mr. J. Doyle, Bombay, Rs. 5/-;
Miss Gul. B. Mullan, Bombay, Rs. 5/-;
Mr. Aspi H. Irani, Bombay Rs. 5/-;
Lt.-Col. K. C. Sanjana, Rs. 5/- and donation to R.A.I. Rs. 5/-.

Subscription to **Reason**:

Mr. Rosario Dias, Bombay, Dr. Frederick Vas, Karachi and Mr. S. M. Bhatkal.

Reserve Fund—Total Rs. 770/-.

To

The Editor, "REASON",
Bombay.

For some time I made a point of attending every R.A.I. dinner or lunch. But after a time I gave up, chiefly owing to the insistence of some member on adherence to and observance of so-called dinner etiquette of the Westerners.

As long as etiquette is not divorced from or conflicting with common sense or good manners, it deserves the name. When, however, it is not based on common sense, it is reduced to senseless superstition or formality. Instead of being ashamed of the ignorance of such "etiquette", I pride myself on the ignorance. I should like to hear your views and those of your readers too.

Yours faithfully,

"LAW-ABIDING, BUT NOT GOD-
FEARING"

(*We have never insisted on any restrictions. In fact, members and guests have expressed their satisfaction on the absence of superstitious formality at all our functions—A.S. Sec. R.A.I.)

SCIENCE and RELIGION

(Continued from page 186)

solitary confinement? Or again, it has been shown by very substantial statistical evidence that the conversions of people under evangelistic influence coincide with the period of adolescence, and that all that then takes place may be explained in terms of the development of new functions, and the awakening of the social side of human nature, misinterpreted in terms of religion. The phenomenon of "conversion" may occur in circumstances that no one would call religious.

So one may go through the whole series of religious beliefs. Religion fits into the framework of modern science. It is religion that can find no place in its ambit for science. There is not a single religious phenomenon—normal or abnor-

mal, good or bad—that falls outside the scope of science. There is no longer room for debating whether religious doctrines are true, there is only the question of under what conditions did people believe them to be true, and under what conditions do they still so accept them?

It would be an easy "get-out" for religion if science were to accept a division of territory. But the demand of science is for the whole of life, for the whole of knowledge, actual and possible. As a French scientist has put it, "Science conducts religion to the boundaries of the universe and bids it a polite good-bye."

A Letter and a Rejoinder

(Continued from page 199)

Let "Concerning Progressive Revelation" is simply a chapter, revised and extended, of "The Churches and Modern Thought". The constructive side of Rationalism will be found posited in the last chapter of the latter book under the headings "Why lead a Moral Life?" and "Should the Truth be Told?", and also in the last chapter of its sequel, "Modern Knowledge and Old Beliefs", under the headings "Should the Truth be Told?" and "Systematic Non-Theological Moral Instruction". All that is happening in our distracted world to-day, whether in Spain, Italy, Germany, Russia, Palestine, Abyssinia, India, China, or elsewhere, serves to strengthen my desire for the reign of Rationalism.

Please excuse this lengthy reply to your friendly criticisms. The fact of the matter is that the latter are in accordance with a widespread opinion which I believe to be as fallacious as it is hurtful to the cause I have at heart. Also I am fairly confident that your careful inquiry into the effects on conduct of Religion on the one hand, and of Rationalism on the other, will lead to a very considerable modification of your present outlook, and even to your approval of Rationalist propaganda. Perhaps you will join the R. P. A.

Sincerely yours,
Vivian Phelips.

- If you recognise Human Equality.
- If you desire Intellectual Liberty and Rational Freedom.
- If you hate Superstition, Priestcraft, Fanaticism, Bigotry and Hypocrisy.

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